The Wedding

by Navybluewings

Summary

Sugawara is the proud owner of "Little Crows", a wedding venue full of personality and love. Daichi is a Karasuno cop, with far less love but just as many characters. The two meet when Noya and Asahi decide to tie the knot, and the sparks are instant. The flirty assistant, bet over flowers, and pining behind the pictures are just the icing on the flying cake. With an impossible deadline and a crazy wedding crew, Suga doesn't have time to think twice of the attractive cop. Daichi isn't sure he can juggle his job, being the dad of his group, and his feelings for Suga all at once. Both know they just can't fall in love.

Too bad nobody told their hearts that.

Notes

Hello hello! I wish you all a happy weekend! This is a baby of mine that I've been working on for a while now, so I really hope you'll enjoy it. Lots of pairings, lots of fun, so please enjoy!
The Idea of Love

“The next time that bridezilla says her wedding doesn’t ‘feel romantic’, I’m going to sleep with the groom.” If there was one thing Sugawara Koushi knew about his assistant, it was that his statement wasn’t an idle threat. Letting out a quiet sigh, the silver-haired man lifted his eyes from the document on his laptop to focus his attention on the whining brunette. Hazel eyes were hidden behind the glasses he only used to read, so Suga pulled them from his face while he responded.

“You can’t use sex to solve every problem you have, Tooru.” Brown eyes blinked at the statement, as if Suga was speaking a different language.

“Hasn’t failed me yet. If it’s not broken, why fix it?” From an objective point of view, Sugawara knew why Oikawa Tooru thought so highly of himself. The man was attractive, and his silver tongue and debonair flair made most people putty in his hands. This was part of the reason that Suga had hired him; Tooru could soothe any raging bridesmaid or panicked groom with little effort. If there were divorced parents who didn’t get along, the flirty brunette could have the two laughing together at the same table with just some sweet words. Drunk groomsman saying a little too much about the bachelor’s party? No problem for the smart man. He’d have them sober and tight-lipped with a not so innocent pinch to their thigh and a few sultry promises for only the man to hear. If there was a problem, Oikawa Tooru could fix it.

His intelligence and beauty had been the reason Sugawara Koushi hired him as his assistant for “Little Crows”.

As a child, Suga was surrounded by love. His parents were the perfect example of a happy relationship; they loved each other dearly, accepted each other’s flaws and encouraged their partner with unconditional faith. That love got expressed even more in their wedding business; The Happy Crows. The name seemed morbid to some, who asked why they hadn’t gone for doves or another romantic animal. But Suga’s parents saw the bird for their potential; not only did crows mate for life, but they raised their babies as a team, the father crow sticking around. This was the same mentality that Sugawara was raised on, with his mother and father working as partners to bring their bright son into adulthood.

They also took care of him in death. Just weeks after his high school graduation, Suga’s parents were killed in a drunk driving accident. He was devastated, and struggled to see anything but the loss of his parents. How was he supposed to find his way without their guidance? But like the loving parents they were, the two had given him the answer. Sugawara had been informed by the lawyer that the wedding venue, as well as the business and a large amount of life insurance, had been left in the younger man’s name. The thought had left him stunned, though not for long.

After all, crows always protected their children, even after they were grown.
Taking over the business had been hard and a bit overwhelming for Suga, unsure if he could manage the establishment on his own. Just the venue alone was massive, which was what enticed so many wedding couples to come there for their ceremony. It had an inside venue, an outside venue, a beach, a gazebo, and even a garden maze. So when Oikawa, a talented classmate with no desire to go to college, offered to work for Suga, the silver haired man eagerly accepted. “The Happy Crows” became “Little Crows”, Suga changing the name to represent his desire to make a name for himself while still honoring his parent’s love for the black bird.

Seven years had passed, and the business was soaring.

“How are the preparations going for tomorrow’s event?” Oikawa’s loud sigh was followed by an eyeroll from Suga; with all those positives, there had to be some drawbacks. And the brunette’s dramas sure was one of them.

“I passed by Kuroo on the way here; he’s out by the gazebo taking pictures for the scrapbook. He just needs to get a few snaps of the lake in the morning to go with the yellow theme of the wedding. Kenma is going to do a quick development on them so the scrapbook will be ready for the guests to sign.” Kuroo Tetsurou was a charismatic photographer who gave Tooru a run for his money in the sex appeal department. Golden eyes were seductive behind the camera, while his unruly bed hair only seemed to beg the question if it looked just as appealing between the sheets. The only difference between the camera man and Tooru was how little he used his looks. Sometimes Suga wondered if the handsome man understood just how many customers did double takes when he walked by. His smile was bright and endearing, snaring even the most defiant moth into his wicked flame.

The only explanation the wedding planner could come up with was Kuroo’s best friend, Kenma Kozume. Kuroo and Kenma were like peanut butter and jelly: impossible to think about one without the other. And while Kuroo oozed with personality, Kenma was unlikely to even make eye contact with a customer. The smaller man was quiet and did everything he could to stay out of the limelight. While his partner took hundreds of pictures, it was Kenma who selected the best and then pulled out their fullest potential in editing. Kuroo was a natural in his job, but Kenma was the genius that deserved just as much credit as his flashy friend.

“Those two sure like to cut it close,” Suga mused, Tooru shrugging as he dropped onto the other side of the couch Suga was sitting on. Though he had a desk in his office, it was rare to see the wedding planner behind it. He enjoyed to be active in his wedding planning, only coming to his office when paperwork needed to be finished. The big couches had been put in after Suga noticed his easily distractible team liked to spend time with him, and meetings were always held in the office. This was also the first place the wedding customers came to talk about their future with Suga. It only made sense to make the place comfortable for his friends and clients alike.
“Just like our little flower pixie.” Without asking, Sugawara knew who the assistant was referring to. Yamaguchi Tadashi was their wedding florist, and the newest edition to their team. He certainly looked young with his freckles, messy cowlick, and innocent brown eyes. Only being twenty-three made him the second youngest member of the group, but his youth paled to his expertise. Yamaguchi was raised with flowers, his family owning their own floral shop. The kind man had an affinity for plants, and with his parent’s encouragement, branched off to try his hand at being a wedding florists. Two years later, Yamaguchi was just as important to Suga’s coalition as any other member.

“Tooru, you know Yamaguchi doesn’t like that name,” Suga chided, Tooru’s cheeks puffing in disagreement.

“But it’s true! You should have seen him out there, fiddling with the little burlap bows on the centerpieces. And the smile he gave the daffodils? So cute.” There was a beat of silence between them as Suga patiently waited for the other shoe to drop from Tooru’s mouth. “One day a lucky man will enjoy fucking that pixie into whatever surface he can find.”

“And there it is.” Laughing despite the raunchy statement, Suga looked back to the document shining on the laptop.

“I would love to tell you about Tobio-chan’s progress, but he refuses to unlock the kitchen door.”

“Don’t worry, I’ve already spoken with Kageyama. The cake’s complete, and the lemon square bars are about finished. He’s waiting for the chocolate to harden on the pineapple blocks, and he’ll be ready for tomorrow.” It was pretty obvious to Suga that the baker was going to clash with his assistant the second they met. Kageyama Tobio was a stoic man, with a scary blue glare and well groomed black hair. He was only twenty-three, yet he was known for his fantastic skills with an oven. He graduated with high ranks from the best culinary school of the country, and had kind of stumbled into being hired by Suga by accident. The reason he stayed for four years could also be attributed to the brunette now pouting on his couch.

“Why does he always avoid me? Am I not supposed to manage him, as well?”

“Maybe because you make it your daily goal to tease, torment, or royally aggravate him?” Suga’s suggestion took little thought as he clicked on an email, his eyes focusing on the new referral.

“What? I don’t do any of that.”
“This morning you switched his sugar with salt. Why do you think he’s still here so late?”

“Tobio-chan just doesn’t understand my affection!”

“I think it’s more like you don’t understand how to give affection.” Not liking Suga’s rebuttal, Tooru crawled across the couch and dramatically plopped his head into Suga’s cross-legged lap. Suga didn’t remove his eyes from the email, but his hand did lower to stroke through the soft strands of Oikawa’s hair. “How did your final fitting with the bridesmaids and bride go?”

“Wonderful, of course. I am the king of tailoring after all. One of the bridesmaid had been upset about not losing the full twenty pounds she had been aiming for, but I had left a little wiggle room just in case. Now if that bridezilla would take a hint from her friends and stop being such a bitch, maybe her marriage will last longer than the toasts.” After his explanation, Tooru hummed in appreciation when Suga’s fingers scratched his scalp. Though the assistant was a handful at times, Suga had to admire how much work he managed. He was in charge of the dresses and tuxes for either side of the wedding party, one of the areas that had the most temper tantrums and breakdowns. He also assisted in keeping an eye on their “little crows”, and Tooru had the uncanny ability to detect when something was two seconds away from becoming a problem.

“You’re the best assistant, even when you’re a pain.” At the backhanded compliment Tooru only snuggled closer to Suga’s lap.

“When are we going to get married, Suga-kun? You’d be the perfect housewife, and think of all the hot sex we could have.”

“I’ll have to pass on that. You are cute, but I don’t think I can handle your sex drive.”

“Just because you haven’t gotten laid in years doesn’t mean a thing. You’re just a bear in hibernation; I’m sure once spring comes, you’re an animal in bed.” Suga burst out laughing at Tooru’s cheeky pun, which was accompanied by a sensual growl. It was enough to overlook the slight prickle of embarrassment at the length of time it had been since he was in a relationship.

“If we’re too busy having crazy animal sex, who is going to run the business?” Suga questioned, playing along with Tooru’s absurd idea. Both were openly interested in men (though the assistant was just as distracted by women), yet he knew Oikawa was only teasing. After working together for as long as they had, it would be impossible to see each other as anything other than business partners and best friends.
“There you go, being all ‘professional’. What a boner killer,” Oikawa whined, though Suga couldn’t say he felt bad. Whining and being dramatic was Tooru’s default state whenever he was told ‘no’. “If you won’t marry me, then I’m going to die a bitter, lonely virgin with way too many cats.”

“It’s hard to be a virgin when your make it your job to sleep with someone from the wedding party every ceremony.” The blunt statement from the wedding planner got a purr of satisfaction from his assistant.

“Now that you mention it, there’s this red-head in the bridal party-”

“I don’t want to listen to you brag about your future conquest.” Suga tried to shoo Oikawa off of his lap, but the man didn’t budge. Instead, he firmly linked an arm around Suga’s thigh, proving he would not be ignored despite Suga’s attempt to push him away.

“You know, your problem is totally self-inflicted. Stop focusing on the romance of it all. You’re pretty, and you’ve been hit on plenty of times. If you wanted to break your dry-spell, almost any guy would be willing to jump your bones. And I don’t just mean the gay ones.”

It was weird to hear such things being directed toward himself, and Suga tried to ignore Tooru to re-read the sentence he had been unable to focus on for a few minutes. Suga knew that part of what the assistant said was true; Sugawara was a romantic. Most of it came from his parents, and it didn’t bother him at all. Love was important to him, which is why he had been so eager to take over the wedding business. Seeing people on the best day of their lives was something precious. But being so invested in other people’s love lives did take a toll on his own; the last two relationships had ended because Suga wasn’t able to focus enough time on his partner. There wasn’t any huge blow-out or argument from Suga’s side when his partner broke up with him; just an understanding smile and a quiet apology. The last time had been two years ago, and since then Suga had avoided the topic like the plague.

“What are you working on so late, anyways?” Tooru’s head popped up in Suga’s field of vision, now laying his chest over Suga’s thigh to read the email.

“It’s a new client I’m planning on meeting up with this week,” Suga answered, letting Oikawa nudge his hand away from the mouse to scroll down a little.

“Asahi Azumane and Nishinoya Yuu. A gay couple? We haven’t done one of those weddings for a while.” Tooru read the names over the picture, his eyes focusing on the image the two had sent in the email before bursting out in laughter. “Oh my god, look how puny he is next to that giant! How
does that even work? I can’t stop laughing!”

“You are awful.”

“Do you think they use a ladder during sex?” Suga groaned as he yanked the laptop from his snickering friend, making sure the bottom hit the back of Tooru’s head.

“I find it disturbing that someone so unromantic is my assistant.” The laptop was placed on the extra cushion as Tooru grinned up at Suga, leaning forward to tap his nose with his index finger.

“If you didn’t have a realist by your side, you’d never be able to say no to people’s ridiculous demands. We’d be in debt after the first wedding. Besides, I do believe in marriage.”

“Just not for yourself.”

“I would marry you-”

“Not even if you were the last person on earth.” The frown was immediate on Tooru’s face, and Suga knew the battle was won. His eyes turned back toward the computer, ignoring the strain from his eyes at how late it was getting. He had been up since six working on the final pieces of the wedding the next day, and he knew he was going to be up early again tomorrow. Just thinking about it made him yawn.

“Feed me.” Tooru’s demand was met with a blink from Suga, the brunette pointing to his mouth. “I want food, so feed me.”

“You are twenty-five years old, why can’t you feed yourself?”

“If you don’t feed me, I’m going to go bother Tobio-chan all night.” The stipulation was paired with an innocent smile, but Suga wasn’t fooled into thinking it was an empty threat.

Despite the blackmail scheme, the wedding planner knew why Tooru was using it. He was concerned about Suga, who had been known to push a little too much self-care to the side during crucial times of the wedding. The joke had always been that Sugawara was married to the job, which was a little too close for comfort sometimes. Though Oikawa had a tendency to be childish and struggled to understand the beauty of true love, he always took care of his co-workers. He was
known for conveniently popping into Kenma’s darkroom and making him try something he cooked
when Kuroo was off site all day and couldn’t check in. ‘You’d look so cute in this, pixie-kun’ was
his excuse for forcing Yamaguchi to wear a sweater on especially chilly nights. Kuroo was victim
to many of Tooru’s morning runs following a stressful shoot, though the photographer always felt
much better afterwards. And despite the pranks and teasing Kageyama had been forced to endure,
Suga was quite aware of how often Oikawa boasted about their baker’s amazing capabilities to
potential customers.

Tooru Oikawa was a caring person; he just showed it in very unconventional ways.

“I’m waaaaaiting, Suga-kun.” The sing-song voice his assistant used brought Suga back to reality,
the wedding planner showing his defeat by shutting the laptop.

“I guess I should save Kageyama from your devious ways.” Suga moved off of the couch to place
his computer on his desk, his eyes flickering to the phone he had left there earlier. The sight made
Suga rethink his statement, nodding once before he grabbed his phone. “Why don’t I get food for
everyone, since we’re all working so hard for our bride.”

“You mixed up ‘bride’ and ‘bitch’.” Tooru’s blunt comment from the couch had Suga shaking his
head, praying the man could keep his sickly sweet persona tomorrow. Even if he hated the entire
bridal party, Tooru was the best at putting on a show. Focusing on the task at hand, Suga’s fingers
tapped on the group chat that was used more than anything else on his phone.

Sugawara: Alright workaholics! Your wonderful boss is buying dinner, what would my little
crows like?
Yamaguchi: Thank you, Suga-san! Can we get pizza? Maybe pepperoni? If it’s not too much to
ask!
Kuroo: Look at this bashful little virgin! He’d probably ask to slip his “pepperoni” in the same
way, if you know what I mean. =P
Yamaguchi: What’?!
Sugawara: Kuroo.
Oikawa: You think he’d top? Have you seen how flexible he is in the garden? That soil’s not the
only thing I’d plowed.
Yamaguchi: ...Maybe I’ll just go home.
Sugawara: No, you’re fine. But Tetsurou and Tooru are about to be on cleanup duty tomorrow.
Alone.
Kuroo: Alright alright, I won’t tease our cherry blossom anymore. Kenma wants hawaiian, let me
wrestle the monster out of the dark room and we’ll meet in the kitchen.
Oikawa: Sausage for me! Maybe I’ll let Yamaguchi have a taste? -wink wink-
Kageyama: Peppers and onions, please. Can Oikawa-san eat outside?
Oikawa: Tobio-chan, you’re so MEAN!!

Sugawara couldn’t contain his laughter as Oikawa rolled off the couch, his cries of ‘Tobio-chan’
ringing loud through the office. His fingers started to dial the number of the all too familiar pizza
shop down the street, his eyes flickering over to a picture on his desk. The frame held a snapshot of
his parents, both obviously in love by the endearing look they shared. And though he warmed at
the sight of them, he couldn’t help but wonder.

Could anyone ever love me like that?

~***~

“Sawamura, he’s coming your way!” The call from inside the house had Daichi alert, his gun aimed at the door he was running toward. But his brown gaze was directed above him when a blurred body caught the corner of his eyes. Dammit, the guy was running on the roof. A muttered swear was snapped from his mouth before he chased the parkour suspect, the man jumping off the roof and tumbling to the ground.

“Stop!” Daichi’s order was ignored as the suspect started to book it down driveway, the black haired officer slamming his gun into his holster before he increased his running speed. The perpetrator only made it to the sidewalk before Daichi’s body crashed into him, both slamming hard into the side of the cop car. Sirens of back-up buzzed in Daichi’s ears as he quickly detained the struggling suspect, cuffs being locked while the automatic ‘you have the right to remain silent’ droned past Daichi’s lips. He ignored the man’s words of innocence, making sure to pat him down and check for weapons. He was a little surprised to find none, wondering why his partner had let the man slip through his hands so easily.

“Get off me, you pig!” A high pitched voiced protested behind them, and Daichi only turned his attention away from the man once he was secured in the back of the cop car. Walking toward one of the backup cop vehicles was his partner, who had thrown his own handcuffs on a woman from inside the house. The black spiky hair framed an olive green stare as the frowning police officer made the woman bend to enter the back seat. Her screams of insult could still be heard as the cop shut the door, having a quiet conversation with the driver before smacking the top of the cop car twice.

“I thought you had him, Iwaizumi?” Daichi’s question to his partner made the older man snort, his head snapping back to look at the shorter officer. It was only then that Daichi caught sight of the blood caked to the side of Iwaizumi’s cheek.

“I did until the crazy girlfriend tried to slice my face in half.”

“You want me to kiss it better?” Daichi’s smile was bright at the teasing question, Iwaizumi making sure to punch his arm as he walked toward the driver’s side of the car.
“Bite me, Sawamura.”

Iwaizumi Hajime was a no-nonsense police office with an accurate shot and even deadlier glare. Daichi had met the other in the police academy, where the two bonded over their affection for volleyball and hard work. Maybe it was their late night conversations or drive to push the other further during training, but captain Ukai liked the chemistry that the two cops had. After they were sent to the Karasuno police force, both were more than pleased to have the other as their partner. The two had been a pair for three years, and lived in the same apartment complex. It was natural to become friends outside of the job, and Iwaizumi would spend many friday nights hanging out with Daichi and his old roommate, Asahi.

“Are you going to get your face checked out?” An hour later had caused the bleeding to stop, though Iwaizumi’s face looked like it could use some medical help. Daichi made sure their suspect’s paperwork was fully filled out before he dropped it into his captain’s box, hearing Iwaizumi scoff at his question.

“I’ve gotten worse scratches during sex.” The two weaved through their office and toward the locker room, Daichi already starting to unbutton his uniform.

“Your boyfriend doesn’t really seem the type to attack for foreplay.”

“Ex-boyfriend.” The emphasis on the beginning of the word made Daichi wince, waiting until they were at their lockers to respond.

“I was wondering why I hadn’t seen his car this morning. I’m guessing it wasn’t a mutual decision?”

“Considering I walked in on him practicing ‘downward doggie’ with his friend from yoga, I’d say no.” Iwaizumi was blunt with almost everything in life, and his cheating ex was no exception. As the two shrugged off their uniforms, Daichi took a few seconds to think of the proper response to the statement.

“Was that last night? I thought I heard some yelling coming from your apartment.”

“Yup. I kicked his sorry ass out. He kept begging me to ‘sleep on it’, like I would magically forget him getting fucked on my brand new rug. I wasn’t going to spend another night with that waste of space.”
“I’m sorry.”

“Don’t be. Better to know now then when we’re married or something. Besides, the only thing I’m really bummed out about is that I won’t have a date to Asahi’s wedding.” Yanking his pants down his legs, Iwaizumi kicked the uniform closer to his locker before he grabbed his jeans. “Then again, I was the only groomsman bringing a date, so now I guess I’m just like the rest of you losers.”

“Either you’re not really okay with the break-up, or your face hurts a hell of a lot more than you’re claiming.” Iwaizumi made sure to slam his locker a little harder than normal at Daichi’s question, and the shorter man took the hint to change the subject. Neither were the best when it came to expressing emotional turmoil, and the last thing he needed was to get punched by his partner. “And there’s a shot that one of us will get a date before the big day.”

“Like who?” The two slung their bags over their shoulders as they left the locker room, Daichi politely waving to the secretary as they passed through the main office. Cool air from the edge of night rushed over them as they jogged down the steps, Daichi snapping his fingers when they hit the bottom.

“What about Ennoshita? He’s a nice looking guy with a good head on his shoulders. On his way to getting his psychology license. I don’t see why it’s impossible for him to get a date.”

“It’s always hard for a single mother to go out.” At his friend’s bizarre statement, Daichi tilted his head and waited for him to continue. “I mean, Tanaka and Noya are basically his children. If he doesn’t visit them in-between his internship and school, I’m sure one of them would end up in the hospital.”

“It’s a little scary to think we let them run their own mechanic shop with no real supervision,” Daichi said, realizing that Iwaizumi was right. Ennoshita was a good person who happened to pick the worst type of people to befriend. Even if he did get a date, somehow the two troublemakers would find a way to accidentally blow the person up. Sending a silent prayer for the younger man, Daichi offered another name. “Well, Shouyou might find someone by then.”

“Oh, right. I forgot Hinata was dating that blonde girl at the vet clinic. How’s our little kindergarten teacher doing for himself?”

“Him and Yaichi broke up over a month ago.”
“Seriously? But I just saw them out to lunch last week.”

“Shouyou didn’t really go into details about it, but he claims that him and Yachi are better off as friends.” And as weird as it sounded, Daichi couldn’t help but agree. He had seen the two a few times since the break-up, and both seemed much more relaxed than when they had attempted to date. Their laughs were real, each one no longer needing to hold back the urge to make fun of the other. Hinata continued to tell Daichi he was perfectly fine with the separation, but the police officer couldn’t help but feel there was something off with his younger friend. Never being the one to push others to talk, Daichi left the subject alone. When Shouyou was ready to talk about it, he would.

“Okay, who else?”

“Well, there’s Tanaka.” At the mention of the mechanic, both cops shared a look before Daichi awkwardly smiled. “Moving on…”

“Well, there’s me, but you already know that story. Who’s the last groomsman for Asahi, anyways?” Iwaizumi’s question made Daichi blink before his laugh filled the spring air.

“Did I forget to tell you?”

“You’re pretty good for that.”

“Shut up.” Daichi nudged the other with his elbow before he looked out at the skyline, their steps on the sidewalk being the only noise. Karasuno was a pretty quiet town, with most of their calls being accidents or rebelling teens in need of a little guidance back on the right track. Today had been a little strange, but Daichi and Iwaizumi kept their training regime tough for these outlier cases.

“So you going to tell me or what?”

“Well, I’m not sure if we ever talk about Tsukishima. Me and Asahi played volleyball with him before he went off and became the super lawyer.”
“Wait, you’re talking about Tsukishima Kei? That brat who became one of the youngest people to pass the bar?”

“Yup, did it at 20, though he’s pretty pissed that they wouldn’t let him take it earlier. He’s a little competitive, though he’ll deny it as soon as you mention it to him.”

“I didn’t think he’d be the type to like weddings, since he’s pretty well known for being a divorce lawyer.”

“Well, you’re not really wrong about that. I’d like to say he did it because Asahi is a good friend, but I think it has more to do with avoiding his parents.”

“Even the mighty Tsukishima seems to fear something.”

The two shared a laugh as they took the turn on their street, the streetlights now on from the lack of sun. A comfortable silence fell on the two, Daichi closing his eyes to enjoy the good weather. Spring was in bloom, which only emphasized how close the wedding was. Though Asahi had asked him to be his best man two months ago, the two had agreed to a wedding in July, which gave little time to actually plan it. According to Noya, they found a wedding planner who was known for working miracles. It definitely took a lot of burden off him and Tanaka’s shoulders, though Daichi had the inkling feeling that he’d still be doing most of the best man work. While he appreciated Tanaka’s fun personality, he wasn’t the most pro-active thinker. It was almost second nature for Daichi to lead things, and he figured this wouldn’t be the exception.

“And what about you, Sawamura?” The call of his name pulling his attention back to the present, Daichi looked to Iwaizumi’s arched eyebrow.

“What about me?”

“Are you bringing Yui?” Daichi shook his head at the suggestion, hoping his smile wouldn’t show the weird tug in his stomach.

“Ah, no. I was thinking about it, but she told me last week that her boyfriend finally asked her to marry him.” Which he was really happy about. Yui had been with the same guy since they were in high school, and their marriage was always a matter of ‘when’. Yui was beaming when she practically shoved the engagement ring into Daichi’s eye, her cheeks flushed the entire time she delved into the proposal. Daichi was invited to the wedding, the two joking about making him the
‘man of honor’. It wasn’t until after the two had parted ways that Daichi felt the same swell of concern he had gotten after Asahi’s announcement. “I think it’d be a little weird to take another man’s fiancee to a wedding.”

“Then I guess you’ll just have to go stag like the rest of us.” Daichi’s noise of agreement was soft, his eyes unfocusing as he let his mind wander.

“The whole thing’s weird.”

“All of us being single?”

“Asahi and Yui getting married. Everyone getting married. Isn’t it just...don’t you feel like we’re behind somehow?”

“Because we’re not getting married? Why the hell would that matter?” Daichi shrugged at Iwaizumi’s strong response, his hands trying not to fist by his sides.

“Everytime I try to date someone, I just fear I’m going to settle. I like them, don’t get me wrong, but it’s not like Asahi and Noya. There’s no real connection between us. But maybe-”

“Who cares if you don’t want to settle?” A rough hand on his shoulder made him pause, the two standing in front of the steps of their apartment. Iwaizumi’s strong gaze proved he wasn’t trying to protect or coddle Daichi when he continued. “I sure as hell ain’t doing it. Maybe if I wanted to ‘catch up’ with everyone else, I would have let my ex stay. But I’m worth way more than that bullshit. And so are you.”

“Me?”

“Obviously. Why do you think so many people like you at work? You’re not the person who has to settle. You’re going to find that girl or guy who makes you happy and that’s it. It’ll end up being something you look back at and go ‘damn, glad I waited for this’. If Asahi hadn’t waited for Noya to barge into his life, he’d never be as happy as he is now. That’s cause that glass-hearted giant knew not to just marry the first person that came along.” The taller cop’s lips pressed tightly together as he scrunched his nose, seeming to think over his next sentence. “Wait for the one that makes your heart goes ‘bwah’.”
There was silence that was only broken by the car passing down the street. It illuminated them before turning into the driveway across the road. Then a soft snort was breathed between them, Daichi’s eyes softening with humor.

“Did you just steal Hinata’s made up word?”

“I-!” Face flushed like a tomato, Iwaizumi slugged his laughing partner in the shoulder hard enough to make him stumble backwards, though Daichi didn’t stop snickering. Embarrassed and angry, the cop stormed up the stairs as he shouted over his shoulder. “Forget it! I hope you end up old and alone with Tanaka living on your couch.”

“Hey, now that’s just mean. Old and alone is one thing, but don’t wish that last burden on me.” Daichi jogged up Iwaizumi, making sure to take a large step around him to get to the door just to the left of his partner’s. He tried not to smile as he listened to the gruff teammate mutter threats under his breath, both unlocking their doors before lifting their heads back up to look at the other. “Wanna go for a morning run tomorrow?”

“Only if you bring the mutt. Otherwise I may be tempted to drown you.” With an exchange of goodnights, Daichi walked into his apartment, tossing his keys to the side before he turned the light on and let out a soft whistle.

“I’m home.” Though he didn’t have a technical roommate anymore, there was one companion who kept guard of his apartment when he was gone. The sound of small feet scurried across the floor, Daichi crouching down when a white dog came bounding toward him. With a medium build, the lab-mix was quick to jump on her owner, who laughed as his butt hit the floor. The dog’s happy yip was followed by a wet tongue on his cheek, Daichi letting his furry friend shower him in love.

It was hard to think that the dog had almost died a year ago. Daichi and Iwaizumi had been on patrol when they got a call over their radio. The weather was rainy, so they had assumed there had been a car accident. When they arrived to the scene, they were surprised to find two firetrucks surrounding a hole in the middle of the road. Beside the opened sewer cap was a child who looked distraught at whatever the firemen were saying. When the two officers came to question the situation, the firemen explained that the kid had called to report hearing barking inside of the manhole. When the firemen showed up, they took off the cap and discovered that somehow, a puppy had gotten dropped into the sewer and was left with his back leg wedged under a rock. It was an obvious plan for someone to try and dispose of an animal no longer wanted.

To add to the matter, the rain had already started to fill the sewers. The storm made it dangerous for anyone to go in to retrieve the dog, not knowing how the puppy would react. The decision from the fire department was clear; no fireman was allowed to go forward with the rescue. Though the kid begged, none would budge. Finally, a pair of hazel eyes found Daichi, little hands clutching to
the side of his soaked police uniform.

“She’s going to die...please, she’s just a puppy!” The little girl’s tears had Daichi asking for the harness before his mind could even agree with him. The young officer offered to do the job, knowing there was little time to waste before the water would drown the puppy. Though the firemen looked hesitant, a fierce look from Iwaizumi had them scrambling to prepare Daichi for the rescue.

The officer wasted little time dropping into the hole, ignoring the slight fear he felt when his feet slipped in the current under him. But he gained his footing and pushed against the flow of water, his goal reached after a few minutes of struggle. He reached out for the dog, which growled and instantly sunk its teeth into his palm. Daichi used the painful grip to pull the dog into his chest, the soaked puppy only flailing for a second before calming against Daichi’s heartbeat. The police officer held the dog to his chest as the fire department lifted him up out of harm’s way. Less than a minute after the rescue, the team watched a wave of water crash through the area the puppy and Daichi had just been in.

While getting checked out (both the dog and Daichi), it was easy to see the puppy was attached. Untrusting to strangers, the wounded animal wouldn’t allow anyone feed or examine her unless Daichi was there. The worn out police officer stayed at the animal hospital the entire night, waiting to hear if the leg of the dog could be saved. Luckily, ‘Sugar’ (Daichi, in order to get the little girl to go home after the rescue, had allowed her to name the puppy) was a fighter. It was only broken, but would need a safe space for her several weeks of recovery. Knowing he had to see his ‘duty’ to the little girl through, Daichi offered to keep her until her leg healed up and she could be adopted out.

And the rest was history. Sugar became a staple in Daichi’s house, and the officer simply accepted her company. Iwaizumi pretended to have no interest in her, but he was pretty easy to read. The grouchy cop was an animal lover by heart, and could be easily talked into walking Sugar on days Daichi was stuck with paperwork. Hell, Sugar even had a dog bed in the other apartment. The white puppy grew into a beautiful dog, who loved nothing more than to run around and play in the park.

Well, that and cuddling with Daichi.

“What a day.”

The cop sighed in comfort when sinking back on the bed, his hair wet from the shower and stomach full from his reheated dinner. Sugar was curled beside him, Dachi lazily stroking her head as he closed his eyes. He thought back to the conversation with Iwaizumi, trying to keep a positive mind. Maybe he just needed to let fate take it’s course, though it was easier said than done. Daichi
always struggled to let go of control, especially over himself. But if he had learned anything from his past year of failed dating, it was he couldn’t force a spark. It needed to happen on its own.

“I guess the only love I need is from you, Sugar.” He smiled when the dog licked his palm in response, the cop closing his eyes to sleep. He had to stop worrying. After all, didn’t love come when you least expected it?

What Daichi couldn’t know was that a half hour away, a particular wedding planner was in bed thinking the same thing.
Chapter Summary

Sometimes Suga felt more like a parent than a boss.

Chapter Notes

Welcome back! You guys were so awesome to me and I just want to say thank you for the support. Without further adieu, here is chapter two!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

For Suga, there was something special about meeting a couple for the first time. It put a pep in his step, and he continued to let his eyes flicker down to the file held to his chest. From the emails the wedding planner shared with Noya (who refused to let Suga call him by his full name), he could tell the possible client was energetic. It was a rarity with his business to have such a passionate groom, most men allowing their wives to take the lead. It wasn’t that they lacked interest; most were just too overwhelmed by all the little choices to get invested. When it came to cake flavors or types of music, men were just as helpful. They just didn’t like to choose between eggshell and ivory.

Noya seemed more than eager to figure out the nuances of getting married. It was a breath of fresh air that Suga was happy to take in. It had caught Suga by surprise when Noya had asked if he could bring someone other than Asahi on the tour of the wedding venue. Suga had agreed, wanting to accommodate the potential client as much as he could. He could only assume it was a set of the parents, which happened on occasion. The ones who were shelling out the money to make their child’s dream come true liked to see what they were paying for. Normally, Suga’s welcoming smile was enough to ease the skeptics, and by the time Oikawa was done with them, the checks were already signed.

But extra people meant that Suga’s team had to prepare more to impress. Nobody felt that burden more than the youngest member of their team. That was the reason Suga was heading to the kitchen so early in the morning. Normally, Suga stayed out of the large renovated basement to give Kageyama space to work. Even though the baker was always awkwardly polite to the wedding planner, Kageyama made it clear how much he enjoyed his introverted nature. The young man may not have ever thought of working at such a social job if Suga hadn’t run into him. Literally. Three days before one of the biggest weddings Suga had planned since taking over the company, Oikawa’s “eccentric” teasing had been too much for the previous baker. He quit on the spot, and Suga (after letting Tooru know how thankful he was for his big mouth) went into panic mode.
He spent the entire day driving to every bakery he could think of in a last-ditch attempt to salvage the damage. Each baker seemed willing to help until hearing the 300 guest roster for the wedding. Never before had he heard the word ‘impossible’ and ‘crazy’ in the same sentence so many times. Even the final shop, a prestigious bakery known for having the best (and most expensive, but Suga was desperate) bakers in the state, wouldn’t take on the task. So distracted by his distraught, the wedding planner walked straight into a tall stranger behind him. The way the blue slanted gaze bore into him had Suga a little nervous until the lanky giant spoke.

“Do you have an oven?”

Suga would learn later on that Kageyama Tobio had been at the bakery to accept a position that he had been chosen for. Although he had beat out fifty other applicants for the job of a lifetime, Kageyama offered to help the frazzled wedding planner. The work he had done in the small gap of time given was phenomenal, intricate, and cleaner than anything the previous baker had created. It exceeded Suga’s expectations, and the bride and groom were over the moon with the extra detail put into their rough draft. Knowing that Kageyama’s talent was far beyond the pay he could offer, Suga didn’t try to make the man stay. He was going to offer Kageyama commission for the cake when the man who started the whole problem decided to put his two cents in.

“His work’s alright, I guess, but nothing special. I’m not impressed. Maybe next time, Tobio-kun.”

Suga was ready to shove Oikawa’s head into the overused oven when Kageyama asked Suga to allow him to stay. The determination covering the young baker’s face was impossible to say no to, though Suga did warn of the obvious pay cut Kageyama would be taking. Their business was growing, but it was nothing compared to the famous bakery. Kageyama would never get the recognition he deserved working for Suga. None of these facts seemed to matter to the baker, and without understanding why, Suga hired him. The years that followed saw a jump in business, the work of prodigy Kageyama Tobio giving ‘Little Crows’ more publicity than the wedding planner expected.

But he had a sneaky suspicion that his assistant knew that detail from the start.

Suga felt his smile grow as the sound of music caught his ear. The soft strings of a romantic melody swept through the small staircase Suga walked down, only growing louder as he approached the baker’s lair. Though Kageyama enjoyed his solitude, his kitchen was never quiet when he was baking. Some late nights, Suga could hear the music ghosting through the hallways as Kageyama created another masterpiece. The mood of the music always held an intimate tune, no matter the speed, genre, or artist. It was the first hint that the young man wasn’t as cold as he appeared. The wedding planner had suspected Kageyama was a closet romantic after watching him put so much heart into his craft. Though the baker had never verbalized it, there was a certain pride he seemed to hold when the bride first saw her wedding cake.
“Good morning, Kageyama.” Suga’s voice echoed in the huge kitchen, the wedding planner making his way through the open space. Ovens lined the left side, the heat of the baking devices warming Suga instantly. The other side had cooling racks, refrigerators, and utensils that Suga would have no idea how to use. In the middle sat a beautiful island counter, the stainless steel covered by delicious smelling lava cakes. The ruler of the kitchen was currently pulling another rack of small cakes from his biggest oven, Kageyama finally noticing he had company.

“Ah, sorry.” Quickly Kageyama tapped the phone on the counter, the speakers screwed into the wall pausing a song Suga didn’t know.

“You didn’t have to shut the music off, I liked that song. It sounded cute.” Kageyama’s ears turned pink at the observation, turning away from his boss to slide the tray onto a cooling rack. Once he removed his oven mitts, he turned back to Suga and bowed.

“I just pulled out the last of the desserts for the Klassen’s wedding. I’ll be preparing the test samples for the walk-through next, though they shouldn’t take more than an hour. I prepped two of the batters last night in case I was running short on time this morning.”

“I’m sorry for asking for this so suddenly; the groom only confirmed the tour yesterday.” Sugawara knew that he was inconveniencing the cake specialist. Their week was a little more packed than usual. While the company only liked to host two weddings a week, unusual circumstances had pushed the number to three. It was part of the reason Suga was having the walkthrough so early in the morning; the team had a night wedding they had to get ready for in a few hours. It was a pretty small wedding (forty guests), and both the groom and bride were older and easy going. Kageyama had made their cake the day before, but that didn’t mean his schedule was free. The wedding the following day had requested one hundred mini lava cakes for their guests (it was the dessert they shared on their first date). There was also an intricate Gothic themed wedding cake that rivaled Kageyama’s first masterpiece due in a few days.

“It’s fine.” But the quiet demeanor of Kageyama showed no stress over the looming projects. Instead, the baker sent a look to his clock on the wall. “Won’t the clients be arriving soon?”

“Yes, the appointment’s at nine.” Which meant the wedding planner should have already been waiting for the two fiancees outside by now. Still, he quietly leaned on the counter as he watched Kageyama pull out two bowls from one of the fridges. “The plan is to take the group to Yamaguchi’s greenhouse first, and then let them take a walk through the garden and by the ocean side.”

“I thought Yamaguchi planned a bouquet showing today with the couple from Itachiyama?”
“I told him that I could introduce him at the end, and he’s already told the couple about the possibility of us poking our heads in. The couple’s renewing their vows, so it’s not as intimate as a first time wedding,” Sugawara explained, letting Kageyama place the now filled cake pans into the oven before he continued. “We’ll do a tour of the venue, the guest house, stop by the photography room, and then we’ll end here to have a cake sampling. I’ll make sure to text you when we’re wrapping up with Kuroo and Kenma.”

“I could leave them in your office.” Suga almost laughed at the rushed flow of Kageyama’s suggestion.

“If you do that, you won’t get the praise you deserve.” The baker tried not to squirm in his spot, and Suga gave him a bright smile before patting his shoulder. “A little social contact won’t hurt, right?”

“No offense, Sugawara-san, but the last time you offered that, Oikawa lit me on fire.”

“Ah, right. Sorry about that.” It was moments like these that Suga had to remind himself that Oikawa was worth the random acts of chaos he created. He was just happy his natural hair color hid his stressed-induced grays. Not wanting to dwell on the bad memory, Suga quickly changed the subject. “But I’m amazed you got all these cakes done already. Last night, you were just starting the batter.”

“I worked overnight on them.” Kageyama’s casual tone was followed by his effortless cracking of an egg with one large hand. Suga knew that Kageyama was trying to slip the unpleasant information by quietly, but the wedding planner’s specialty was picking up on small details.

“Does that mean you skipped on another night of sleep?” When Kageyama’s eyes refused to meet the focused gaze of his boss, Suga knew his answer. “How many times have I told you not to do that?”

“I wasn’t intending to, time just...escaped.”

“You’ve got to take care of yourself, Kageyama. Do I need to have Oikawa give you a curfew?”

“Please don’t tell Oikawa-san.” Was Kageyama’s instant reply, making Suga let out a tired sigh. Sometimes, he felt more like a babysitter than a wedding planner.
“As soon as we’re done with the cake testing, you need to go home and sleep. I don’t need you for the wedding tonight, so you can have the rest of the night off. Understood?”

“Yes, Sugawara-san.” Suga was going to remind the baker that he didn’t need to be so formal, but the chiming of his phone caught his attention. He paused his scolding to re-read the text his biggest ‘problem child’ had sent him.

Oikawa:CODE Periwinkle! Bring your sweet ass to the terrace ASAP!

“Oh no,” Suga groaned, Kageyama effortlessly whisking the batter as he tilted his head.

“Something wrong with the client?”

“No, it’s Oikawa being...well, Oikawa.” The instant tensing of the taller man’s shoulders seemed reflexive, though Suga couldn’t blame him. If there was one person who felt the full effect of the ‘Tooru phenomenon’, it was Kageyama.

“He doesn’t know you’re down here, right? I’d like to get these cakes finished on time.”

“No, I’ll face this tornado alone. Wish me luck.” The two shared a look that spoke the words Kageyama was too polite to say; luck meant nothing when dealing with Oikawa Tooru. Suga left the kitchen and moved toward Oikawa’s location, wondering just what his assistant had gotten into this time. The terrace that hung over the front of the venue gave a full view of the land ‘Little Crows’ was built on. It was Sugawara’s favorite place to end his day before going home. Oikawa rarely went there, though, claiming the ‘romantic feel of the place’ gave him a stomach ache.

So when Suga spotted an overjoyed smile on Oikawa’s face, he became suspicious.

“What’s going on? And what is ‘Code periwinkle’?” Oikawa’s pout was clearly faked, his glee for whatever was happening ruining his act.

“Did you not read the handbook I gave you?!” About a year ago, Oikawa had handed out handbooks with over fifty different codes for ‘emergencies’. The wedding planner had gotten to ‘Code Screamin’ Green: Aliens are in the wedding party’ before Suga had stuffed it as far into his
“I’m pretty sure the only one who did was Yamaguchi.”

“Bless that sunflower’s soul. Someone appreciates the hard work I put into this company.”

“At least I didn’t burn it like Kuroo.”

“Wait until I get hold of his hair products—”

“Tooru, periwinkle?” Suga asked, trying to keep his smile from showing his desire to push Oikawa off the terrace. The color snapped Tooru back to his first topic, his eyes lighting up in a way that only meant one thing; the assistant had stumbled on someone attractive.

“Oh, that. Well, code periwinkle is sent out when a group of hot men all appear in one area. And I have to say, I haven’t put this code to good use since the stripper’s wedding.”

“Okay, now you’ve lost me,” Suga admitted, nearly yelping when Tooru snatched his hand and yanked him to the railing of the terrace. Before the wedding planner could question him, the brunet pointed their conjoined hands to the parking lot below them.

“Say hello to our new clients and their really hot friends.” True to the assistant’s assessment, Suga was greeted with a sight he wasn’t expecting so early in the morning. Their parking lot was filled with a gathering of men he had never seen before. But on a second look, Suga realized that wasn’t exactly true. The bright streak of blond coming from the shortest man’s brunette hair was hard to forget from the picture tucked in the folder Suga nearly dropped in surprise. When Noya had mentioned bringing people with him for the walk-through, he didn’t expect eight of them! Blinking a few times to make sure he wasn’t seeing things, Suga slowly slipped his phone from his pocket and clicked on one of his saved contacts. He didn’t let his eyes tear from the small crowd as the quiet voice on the other side picked up.

“Kageyama...we’re going to need some more cake.”
“Why are we all here?” Iwaizumi’s deep tone felt out of place so early in the morning on their day off. Daichi knew from experience his fellow cop wasn’t a fan of mornings when he wasn’t working or working out. Yet this morning he had been ordered out of his bed from the short fiancee of their friend. The mechanic was currently wide eyed and bushy tailed as he and Hinata ran around the parking lot, pointing to the parts of the venue they could see and talk about loudly.

The only benefit to the trip was that he had ridden up with Asahi and the other groomsmen on the tall man’s side. Noya was in charge of his rambunctious crew, though that shifted the responsibility to Ennoshita. The psychology student was currently yelling for Tanaka to put his shirt back on, the best man showing his excitement the only way he knew how. How any of them could be awake when waking up so early was a mystery to the cop, but none of them had been stuck at work until 3 in the morning either. That fact only added to Iwaizumi’s irritation, though the gruff cop had been trying to keep his bad mood to himself.

“I’m really sorry, but Noya asked me to invite you. It’s a tradition for families to go and since Noya’s family…” Daichi saw the nervous look on Asahi’s face as he glanced to his fiancee, the cop knowing what his friend was implying. When Noya and Asahi had announced their engagement, not everyone approved. Though all their friends had been supportive, both sets of parents had refused to recognize the wedding or relationship. Asahi had predicted the rejection, as his preference for men had been an “issue” since college. That had been the reason Daichi and Asahi had become roommates. Noya, however, hadn’t expected the snub from his parents. The cold shoulder had hit the mechanic hard and made Noya depend even more of his friends for support and guidance. It shouldn’t have come as a surprise that Noya would want to include each of them in the venue choice; they were his new family.

The thought made Daichi’s earlier irritation evaporate, replacing it with a warm sense of belonging.

“If any of those morons were my family, I’d be taking a page from Itachi Uchiha.” Tsukishima’s blunt statement got a snicker from Iwaizumi, Daichi placing a reassuring hand on Asahi’s fretting shoulder.

“Ignore him, Tsukishima wouldn’t want to be here even if it was his own wedding.” Before the lawyer could come up with a snarky response, Daichi turned the attention to the venue. “But I have to say, Asahi, this place is nice.”

“Oh, yes! We heard good reviews about this business, and Noya enjoyed the different choices they provided in their accommodations.”

“You’re going to be paying a pretty penny for this wedding.” At Iwaizumi’s remark, Asahi smiled and shrugged.
“That’s fine; my last book’s sales were better than expected.”

“You say that every time; get some confidence in your writing already.” Daichi’s hard slap to the giant’s back made him stumble, the group laughing at the kind groom. Asahi was known for his writing, though his pen name ‘A. Ace’ kept his identity hidden. It wasn’t that Asahi wanted to hide from his fans; he loved the fact that his children’s books were received so well. The problem came with his intimidating appearance. Though he was kind at heart, his tall presence and mature features had always made his interactions with children result in tears. His publisher had come up with the idea to give him a pen name and simply let his words represent his true self. Since then, Asahi’s books had flown off the shelves at every bookstore around the world, and the revenue was nothing to complain about.

“You did give Nishinoya a limit on this wedding, right?” When Asahi shook his head, Tsukishima sighed and rubbed the bridge of his nose under his glasses. “Big mistake.”

“You probably should have talked about that; we all know Noya tends to be a bit flashy.” Even Daichi found himself agreeing with the lawyer, but the consensus didn’t seem to bother Asahi. Warm brown eyes shifted to the smaller groom, a reflexive smile painting the writer’s lips. “I’m not worried about the money. Even if we were broke, I’d let Noya pick whatever he wanted. So long as Noya gets the day he deserves, then I’ll be happy.” And it would be impossible to call Asahi a liar with the look he was wearing. Daichi didn’t need to know the two for more than two seconds to see how in love they were. Noya never shied away from shouting his praise for his fiancee any chance he got. Asahi wasn’t as vocal, but his actions spoke louder than any words could. From fretting when Noya got sick, accompanying the wild child anywhere his adventurous heart wanted or finding his backbone whenever someone hurt his lover, Asahi was proof that true love still existed. And though Daichi had been rooting for them since their first disastrous meeting, seeing Asahi’s expression was a little uncomfortable. He hated the sliver of negative thoughts that crept into the back of his head, but he shoved them down when Tsukishima spoke.

“People who spend more money on their weddings have a higher chance of divorce.”

“Ah, what a romantic,” Iwaizumi said, laughing when the lawyer gave a casual shrug.

“Simply putting things into perspective.”

“Maybe you should work on your timing,” Daichi suggested, watching Asahi tense at the new
information. Everyone knew it was more likely for the earth to get swallowed by a black hole than for them to get divorced. But that didn’t stop Ashi from getting worried.

“Good morning!” A cheerful tone filled the morning air, the men’s attention drawn to the front of the venue. A man now hopped down the front steps, the soft-looking brunette strands bobbing with each jump. Once reaching the pavement, the eccentric person turned his coy brown gaze to the group that had slowly merged back into one. He sent them a playful wink, a wave looking a little too sensual to be deemed benign. “I haven’t seen so many good looking men since the wedding with-”

“Oikawa!” A new voice called out to the guy, and Daichi lifted his gaze to assess the newcomer. The first thing that Daichi noticed was just how pretty the color of this man’s eyes was. Hazel and filled with expression, it was clear to read the uneasy look he sent his counterpart. The panicked man’s impish face was flushed as he raced down the stairs. Silver strands seemed to rebel as he nabbed one of the ears of the man named Oikawa and pulled. “You seriously need to learn what not to say when meeting a client.”

“Ow! Let go, Suga-kun, you know I’m not into this kind of pain!” In seconds the confident man who had first greeted them was reduced to a child trapped in a man’s body. The one named Suga sighed like this wasn’t the first time he had used this tactic before letting go. He then turned to the group and presented a smile that Daichi swore had been practiced. Like a warm blanket, the look eased the nerves nagging the back of his brain since first hearing about the wedding. Oikawa would probably be considered the more attractive male by society’s standard, but there was something natural about the man now walking toward Noya.

“It’s a pleasure to finally get to meet you, Noya-san. I’m Sugawara Koushi, we’ve been exchanging emails for the past few weeks.”

“You weren’t kidding when you said this place was huge. I feel like I could get lost here.” Noya’s grin showed he wanted to test that theory, making Daichi sigh. The last thing he needed was a panicked Asahi frantically searching for his reckless fiancee. Suga smiled at the statement and bowed his head gently.

“I’m happy that you’re happy with the venue so far.”

“Wah, you’re so pretty!” It wasn’t Noya who responded this time, but the man with fluffy orange hair beside him. If Suga was surprised by the outburst, there was no trace of it in his good-natured laugh.
“Thank you very much.” The warm look he sent Shouyou seemed to instantly enamor the preschool teacher, and Suga lifted his attention to the rest of the group. His eyes stopped on Asahi’s tall form, eyes lighting up in recognition. “And good morning to you as well, Asahi-san.”

“A-Asahi is fine!” Watching the groom rush to bow made Daichi want to smack his best friend. When was he going to realize he wasn’t a nervous school girl, but an adult male who looked like he could run the mafia? Suga waited politely for Asahi to finish his bow, then glanced at the group.

“When Noya told me he would be bringing people, I never expected such a supportive group. It’s a little more than we’re used to.”

“I can leave.” Tsukishima’s offer was instant, though a shake of the head from the wedding planner ruined his plan of escape.

“No, it’s not a problem! We here at Little Crows want the couple to feel as comfortable as possible for their wedding arrangements. But we would like to split your party into two groups, which is why I’ve brought my assistant along.” The fair-haired wedding planner turned his attention back to the brunet, stepping to the side to allow the group to fully see him. “Oikawa Tooru has been with the company since the start and is a skilled tailor. He’ll be helping you with your tuxes, as well as last minute adjustments or emergency situations. Oikawa, say hello.”

“I was trying to before someone grabbed my ear,” Oikawa muttered, a poignant stare from Sugawara making Oikawa wave his hand and saunter back toward the group. “But I won’t let Suga’s childish manners to ruin the tour. So let’s get this party started, shall we?”

“Would you be okay with our proposal?” Suga asked, Asahi sending Noya a questioning look. The mechanic gave a thumbs up and a grin, showing his approval of the plan.

“Works for me, but I want to stay with Asahi.”

“It would probably be for the best to keep the two grooms together to discuss things,” Suga agreed, smiling when Noya eagerly captured Asahi’s bicep between both his arms. “Any other requests?”

“Keep me away from Tweedledee and Tweedledum.” Tsukishima cemented his point by nodding his head toward Hinata and Tanaka, both blinking in confusion at the underlying insult.
“That brings up a good point; Ennoshita’s going to need some support if he’s going to be dealing with Shouyou and Tanaka alone.” Daichi rubbed his chin at the predicament before he turned to Hajime, giving him a side smile. “Iwaizumi, think you can keep the two troublemakers in check?”

“Wouldn’t be the first time.” It Daichi was the father of the group, then his partner took the role of a no-nonsense mother. While Daichi ruled with a fair but firm grip, Iwaizumi had no problem whacking anyone who got out of line. Sometimes, when Daichi was too tired to handle whatever mischief his “children” had gotten into, he sent Iwaizumi to deal with them.

“Then it’s settled; Ennoshita, Shouyou, Tanaka and Iwaizumi will be in Oikawa’s care, and Noya, Asahi, Tsukishima and I will work with Sugawara. Everyone understood?” Daichi’s orders were met with quick nods, Oikawa’s hand clapping together after.

“Wonderful! Let’s get this show on the road; come along, Iwa-chan.” Daichi had to cough over his burst of laughter at his partner’s horrified face, Tsukishima showing no such courtesy.

“Iwa-chan? Did he just call him-”

“Not another word.” But the normally solid growl from the burly cop was demolished by the blush on his cheeks. Tsukishima complied, but Daichi was sure it was because he was snickering too much to speak. Irritated, Iwaizumi sent a glare toward the assistant now watching him in intrigue. “I don’t do nicknames.”

“People tend to do many things they don’t expect around me.” The implication was heavy in Oikawa’s voice, the sensual man placing his hand on the cop’s shoulder.

“I’m sure they do, Shittykawa.” When Iwaizumi shrugged the assistant’s touch off his skin, it was obvious that Oikawa was stunned. Suga was the one who couldn’t control his laughter this time, and Daichi enjoyed the melodious sound coming from the wedding planner. After a few seconds, Sugawara composed himself, turning his attention on his scowling assistant.

“Tooru, maybe you should focus on showing them the photography room? Kuroo is already aware you’re on your way. And keep to the schedule, as we’ll be meeting up for the cake sampling.” Suga’s suggestion was met by an unamused assistant, his pretty brown eyes glaring at his boss before stalking away.

“Do you think they’ll be alright?” Asahi asked, Suga quick to give a reassuring nod.
“Oikawa is good at his job; your friends are in excellent hands.” Waiting for the two grooms to relax at the information, Suga turned his attention to the two remaining members of the group. “If you two wouldn’t mind accompanying us to the garden, we’ll start our tour there.”

“We have an option?” Daichi gave the lawyer a jab to the side with his elbow, covering Tsukishima’s swear with a reply.

“Sounds perfect to us. Lead the way, Sugawara.”

“You can call me Suga,” the wedding planner supplied, sending him a smile that caused the cozy feeling to return in his stomach. “Do you prefer Sawamura or Daichi?”

“Oh, Daichi is... fine.” He knew his answer sounded strange, but it had taken him a second to realize Sugawara knew his name. He thought about the previous conversation, trying to remember if it had come up. As far as he could remember, it hadn’t, but he kept his curiosity over the predicament to himself when Suga flickered his warm eyes to the blonde.

“And you?”

“Tsukishima.” The curt response didn’t offend Suga from the easy nod he gave in response. He then started to lead the group away from the parking lot, his attention returning to the main stars of the appointment.

“While we walk, I’d like to get to know the two of you better. Would you mind telling me how the two of you met?”

“Well, I kind of broke his ankle.” The blunt statement from Noya did not do justice to the disaster that was their first meeting. Daichi would know; he had a pretty good seat of the whole mess. But seeing the look of confusion on the wedding planner’s face, Noya decided to elaborate on his favorite story. “So I was working in the shop with Tanaka when I got this serious craving for Cheetos. I didn’t trust baldie to get the right ones because his taste in food is horrible. So I left him in charge of the shop and I went to the supermarket, simple task, right? No. I swear they put all the good stuff on the top shelves just to make me suffer. Sure, they had Cheetos on the bottom shelf, but it was the gross crunchy kind and who wants those? Tanaka would, I bet.”

“Of course,” Suga answered, trying to hold back his smile as Noya’s enthusiasm for the story
“So here I am, trying to climb the shelves to get the Cheetos, knocking bottles of soda and God knows what else on the floor. But my arms are just too short to get to them! Impossible for someone like me, or anyone normal, to get to.”

“All this could have been avoided if you just asked for assistance,” Daichi added, knowing the story by heart. He even knew that Noya would send him that glare he used whenever someone made a reference to his small stature.

“That’s what they want you to do! I wasn’t going to let them win.”

“So how did you get the Cheetos?” Suga inquired, his interest seeming more genuine that Daichi expected. Wedding planners tended to play the part of the supportive friend to gain clients, yet Suga’s non-judgemental gaze and honest expression didn’t feel like an act. Noya seemed to agree, his dramatics rising for the next part.

“That’s the best part! This super handsome guy came over like some Prince Charming—”

“Yuu,” Asahi interrupted, cheeks bright in embarrassment. No matter what compliment Noya used at this part of the story, the gentle giant would blush. And like clockwork, Noya waved him off but gave his arm an affectionate squeeze.

“So my savior comes and thwarts the evil corporation’s plan by being freakishly tall and hot. And so me, always being told to not let a favor go unnoticed, had to reply him, right?”

“Right,” Suga agreed, smiling through his nod. Tsukishima’s concentration had long since been lost, his bored gaze skimming an email on his phone. Asahi was now the color of a tomato, and Daichi found himself sneaking another glance at the wedding planner’s grin.

“So I jumped on him and kissed him. The fact that he may be a serial killer, or worse, straight, didn’t even cross my mind. I mean, every guy as hot as my fiancee must at least be bi-sexual. I’m guessing neither you or Oikawa are straight?”

“Way to be obnoxious,” Tsukishima snorted, eyes not leaving his screen. Noya didn’t seem to agree, and he waited for his wedding planner to answer. Suga’s pale skin showed a shadow of a
“Our wedding team is very attractive.” The sly answer was impressive to Daichi, and Noya practically vibrated while he walked.

“So you understand why I had to kiss Azumane. It was just the natural way of things. But being as shy and panic prone as my fiancee is, he didn’t know what to do. So flustered by my amazing kiss, he backed up over one of those bottles I had knocked over and did not land well.”

“As in, he broke his ankle,” Daichi answered, taking this moment as his cue to take over the long winded story. “I got a voicemail at the station that my roommate at the time was being sent to the hospital. By the time I get there, I see Noya curled up on the side of his bed, refusing to leave his side. Asahi got his ankle wrapped, a bunch of pain medications, and Noya’s phone number scribbled on his cast with the promise of free oil changes for the rest of his life.”

There had been one small problem with Noya’s plan. With Asahi unable to drive, it meant his car wasn’t going to need an oil change for some time. The anxiety of not having a reason to call Noya (because having a guy give you his number after kissing you wasn’t enough for the panicked mess) forced Daichi to drive the car around with no destination for hours. Asahi promising to pay him back. Needless to say, it was a stressful month for Daichi, and he wasn’t even in the relationship.

“It took him a while for him to show his face at my shop, but it worked out in the end. And now we’re here, getting married!”

“You have a very special story,” Suga said, Noya’s bright smile showing his appreciation.

“You call that special? I would slot that under ‘insanity’.” If Suga was put off by Tsukishima’s sour attitude, he didn’t let it show on his face. Instead, the wedding planner innocently cocked his head to the side when focusing his attention on the lawyer.

“Really? Could you share your love story with me then? I’d like to hear your version of special.” As the group stopped outside the greenhouse, Daichi felt the air rush from his lungs at Suga’s passive aggressive question. Though he kept the mask of naivety, Suga wasn’t stupid. This guy knew damn well that Tsukishima had no “love story”. He might as well have come out and said the truth behind the statement; nobody liked a pessimistic prick. But with his sweet framing and benign smile, the lawyer couldn’t call him out. The blonde seemed to recognize the subtext as well if his displeased scowl was anything to go by. The moment of silence was short-lived, the song of Tsukishima’s phone breaking through loudly. Instantly the lawyer flipped the phone to his ear, muttering a quiet ‘what’ into the device. A second later the phone was pulled away from his cheek,
Tsukishima’s annoyed stare reaching Suga.

“Is there somewhere private I could take this?”

“If you go around the back of the greenhouse, the garden’s pretty secluded. We’ll be in the greenhouse when you’re done.” A short nod was the only response the tall man gave before making his departure. He wanted to say it was a smooth exit, but his quick pace gave away his frustration. The phone was shoved back to his ear once out of hearing range, though his voice stayed low.

“I’m back.”

“Back from where? You should be on your way to breakfast.” The regal tone of the woman on the phone could rival a queen’s, yet Tsukishima felt no need to bow to her command.

“Can’t, I’m busy.”

“I set this meeting up with Mr. Shimizu and his lovely daughter two weeks ago. You said nothing about being busy.”

“I hadn’t found an excuse yet,” he answered, not in the mood to lie. He was already irritated by that cheeky wedding planner. The last thing he wanted to do was play politics with his own mother. “But now I’m at a wedding venue walk through and I’ll be busy for the next few months. Send Mr. Shimizu a fruit basket for me.”

“Why are you so against this arrangement? Aren’t you the one who says that marrying for love is a recipe for disaster?”

Wonder where I got that mentality from?

It was no secret that the Tsukishima family was not built on love. Kei’s parents were paired up in an archaic marriage arrangement that benefited their families. Somehow, they tolerated each other enough to have Kei as well as his older brother, Akiteru. Though Kei was a quiet, simple child, Akiteru was the black sheep of the family. He didn’t shy away from making real connections with people and the eldest son chose love over logic every time. He didn’t plan to be a doctor, lawyer, or any high-ranking job to do the Tsukishima name proud. Instead, he worked with his father-in-law
and wife at a small convenience store. Kei’s parents never got over the ‘act of betrayal’, while Kei simply didn’t understand. Why would his brother, his childhood idol, throw everything away for something so unpredictable?

As he got older, Kei decided to he’d never get the answer to his question and did everything he could to forget his curiosity.

“I know you’re using your friend’s wedding as an excuse to avoid the proposal.”

“You were always the smart parent.” Sometimes, his sarcastic ability even surpassed his own expectations.

“And you’ve got your father’s tact.” With the conversation distracting him, Tsukishima hadn’t realized how far he had wandered until a faint sound of laughter grabbed his ear. He glanced around, bright foliage surrounding him. The garden was quite full, despite the weather being less than helpful the past week. His eyes lifted when the giggles echoed again, though he hadn’t located the source of the noise.

“You’re right; I’m hanging up now.” And without warning, Tsukishima ended the call. He wished that the conversation would be killed with that rude ending, but he knew his mother’s ruthless nature was what made her such a great defense attorney. He shoved the phone into his pocket as he walked along the path presented to him, noticing the laughter from earlier had gotten louder. After a few minutes, the garden parted to a grassy area of the venue. A gazebo could be seen in the distance, but his attention was focused on something closer.

Three people were sitting in the grass, the giggling coming from one of the two young girls who could be no older than six. Flowers were scattered between them, but the thing that surprised the lawyer was the third person between them. He was neither female nor a child. His shaggy haircut was laughable and was topped with a crown of roses no respectable man would wear. He had enough freckles to be noticeable even from a distance. The man’s lap was covered with flowers, his small hands twining the stems of the white flowers together. Tsukishima watched silently as the man finished what he was working on, lifting the circle of flowers to one of the girl’s head. The other child wore a headdress filled with purple flowers Tsukishima had seen before but knew nothing about. The first girl stared at the man in pure awe as he tapped her nose and smiled.

“And the king of flowers crowns you the princess of the daisies.” His voice fit his body, lacking timber or rough edges. The girl squealed at the title, climbing into his lap before throwing her little arms around his neck.
“You’re going to make mommy the prettiest flower princess ever!” And like the statement was the noble prize, the freckled man patted the girl’s head affectionately. Seeing more than enough of the sickly scene, Tsukishima started to turn back to the path he had taken. His movement was halted when a hand yanked on his finger, the tall man glancing down to the little girl now staring at him. Her flower crown was neatly placed above her big green eyes, her smile missing some teeth as she pulled on his hand again.

“Did you come to play with us, mister?” The lisp the child had was annoying, but Tsukishima kept the information to himself. He knew the difference between snarky and cruel. But that didn’t make the desire to pull away from the grubby fingers any less persistent.

“Madeline!” There was a crack in the voice of the man, seeming to just realize where one his kids went.

“You’re a pretty bad babysitter. What if I was a weirdo looking for a kid to abduct?” Tsukishima smirked at the quick flush the other man now wore, his hands flailing as he defended himself.

“I’m not a babysitter.” Quirking his eyebrow, the lawyer couldn’t resist teasing the fool some more.

“Oh? So are you the weirdo here? Guess I should inform the police.” He had no intention of wasting his time with the police; two of them were currently on the property. But watching the red cheeks turn to white so easily was something he wanted to do again. The man’s eyes looked ready to pop out of his head in a mixture of shock and fear. The girl on the brunet’s lap seemed to notice her ‘king’ was upset, and with a scowl, she pointed her little finger toward the lawyer.

“Don’t be mean to Yamaguchi! He’s the king of flowers and he’s going to make my mommy and daddy’s wedding beautiful.”

“I see. You must be the florist.”

“Ah, y-yes! I’m Yamaguchi Tadashi.”

“I never thought I’d find a man desperate enough to become a florist at a wedding venue. Then again, the whole idea of weddings is just a money pit, so I should commend you in finding a solid revenue.”
“That sounded mean!” The girl shouted, and Tsukishima could only assume she didn’t understand half the words he had said. She was only six, after all. Finally, the blond shook his hand from the other girl’s grasp, watching her waddle back to the florist. The freckles on the man’s face dipped with the scowl, his eyes clearly showing his protest of the lawyer’s claim.

“I didn’t become a wedding florist for profit. I work for Suga-san because I love my job and I want to help make people happy.”

“Weddings are just a show to try and cover the problems in the couple’s relationship. It’s nothing more than a waste of money.”

“Take that back!” The lawyer’s words clearly upset the two girls, and a part of him disliked the weird tension in his stomach when the florist sent him a displeased look.

“Madeline, Amelia; why don’t you go show your mommy your crowns?” Both girls nodded at Yamaguchi’s suggestion, the freckled man rising to his feet while they scampered away. Tsukishima followed them with his gaze before he scoffed, sending a look back to Yamaguchi while casually fixing his glasses.

“Are you going to scold me now, king of flowers?”

“No, but they didn’t need to hear some po-pompous jerk ruin their dreams.” It was almost comical to be insulted by a man who was adorned with a flower crown. He was used to tight-lipped attorneys and sharp-tongued lawyers, but this? Tsukishima simply arched his eyebrow as the obviously sweet man struggled to “lash out” at him. “They want to believe in love and magic! What’s wrong with that? And what even gives you the right to shove your...your r-rude self into their dreams and destroy them? And who made you the king of marriage? You are just not nice!”

“Ouch, harsh. Being a dick or a bastard is one thing, but not nice? Not sure how I’m going to sleep tonight.”

“Do you have something against me?”

“Not you, though I’m sure with some more conversation I could find something dis-pleasurable about you.” Tsukishima sighed at the conversation, not sure why he was even wasting his time. Most people were lucky if they got three words out of him, and those were the ones he considered his friends. Yet the lawyer felt compelled to entertain the florist with his explanation. “I dislike
weddings. They’re nothing more than commercial gain. It only creates stress and debt for the ‘happy couple’. There is nothing about a wedding that is special or magical. You sell a lie.”

“They aren’t shams. I’ll prove it to you!”

“Is that a bet?” There was little in life that could interest Tsukishima. Most things, like women or money, were boring and not worth his attention. But when someone decided to bet with the lawyer, he had a hard time saying no. If it was Tanaka trying to get him to streak across the cafeteria, he didn’t consider that a bet. It was just a reflection of how dumb humanity could get. But when it came to cases at his job or challenges of reasonable expectations, Tsukishima always got a rush of adrenaline. From the hesitant look on Yamaguchi’s face, he could tell his underlying ambition was showing through.

“Uh, I-”

“Perfect, then it’s a deal. If you can get me to admit that weddings aren’t a waste of money before my friends exchange their vows, I’ll acquiesce by never touching another divorce case again.” The widening of the brown gaze was making it hard for Tsukishima to keep his smirk from seeping into his voice. “But if you fail, then you’ll resign from Little Crows.”

“That’s…” The florist couldn’t meet Tsukishima’s sharp gaze, his white teeth snagging his lower lip as he twirled his fingers in front of him.

“What’s wrong? Have you lost your confidence in the power of love?” He was baiting the man, he knew it. He did it all the time during cross-examinations or witness liability prosecutions. But there was something special about the way Yamaguchi jerked his head up, his eyes shining with rebellion underneath that kind demeanor.

“No, I know I’m right.”

“Then let’s shake on it.” The lawyer raised his hand between them, willing to seal the deal.

“O...Okay.” It took a few seconds for Yamaguchi to slide his trembling hand into the offered grip, the firm shake of the practiced lawyer jostling the rose crown over Yamaguchi’s forehead. Golden eyes flickered to the tilted headdress, his free hand moving to flick the crown back into place.
“May the best man win, Yamaguchi Tadashi.” The pad of his thumb brushed over the temple of the florist, and he watched as freckles hid beneath the red hue spreading over Yamaguchi’s cheeks. He let his touch linger for a second before he pulled away, dropping his hand while he casually checked his phone. He had missed a text from Daichi, asking where the tall blond had gone. He was sure the cop would not be supportive of the little bet he had just partaken in, and he had no desire to get scolded like a child. “Now, shall we go back to the greenhouse?”

“Oh, yes!” Yamaguchi was quick to find the dirt path from before, the lawyer casually strolling behind him. The florist must have tripped three separate times in his attempt to rush back to the greenhouse, and Tsukishima felt the side of his mouth twitch in amusement at each stumble.

Maybe the little florist would make this wedding interesting, after all.

Chapter End Notes

And it's off to the races for Tsukishima and Yamaguchi. What will happen with their bet? How did Suga know Daichi’s name? How will the rest of 'Little Crows' react to this wedding party? Leave a comment with your guesses!

Next chapter- Love and Lava Cakes
Love and Lava Cakes

Chapter Summary

Hinata was sure of three things: He was straight, he was athletic, and neither one of those mattered when meeting Kageyama.

Chapter Notes

Good afternoon one and all! I hope you're pumped to read the next disaster chapter with our favorite group of men! Enjoy =)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Do you have any idea why Yamaguchi looked ready run the entire time we were talking to him?” Daichi stared at the lawyer he had pointed his question to, who simply shrugged in response.

“Maybe he’s just shy.” But there was a gleam to Tsukishima’s eyes that made Daichi doubt that was the entire story. The bored lawyer looked like the cat who swallowed the canary, but getting information from the blond was like finding water in the desert. Knowing that interrogating Tsukishima would just make his ego inflate, Daichi returned his focus to the conversation Noya had engaged Suga in.

“Suga, this place is so amazing. How did you think of such a great business?” The wedding planner’s smile was small as he lead the group through the venue, the hazel eyes staring at the wave crescent water next to them. Noya’s observation wasn’t wrong; the plot of the land was smart. Normally, venues would provide a nice place for an indoor or outdoor wedding. On the rare occasion, they could do both. But from the walk-through so far, this was in a league of its own. The inside hall was perfect for a reception with a big guest list, while the gazebo outside was quaint and gave a feeling of intimacy. A small walk past that was the beach coastline, and the possibilities of wedding ceremonies on the sand were endless. Suga had also pointed out a smaller building down the road, informing them it was for the wedding party to sleep in before the wedding. It felt like Little Crows was made to accommodate for any and all. He could only imagine how much Suga had to pay to get this real estate.

“Well, you could say it was passed down to me. My parents used to own a wedding business named ‘The Happy Crows’. They had it before I was born, and we used to joke it was their first real baby.” Suga laughed, but Daichi noticed the sound he had been paying attention to had lost some of its sweetness. “I helped out when I was a kid, and I liked the feel of the business. When I was eighteen, my parents were involved in a car accident and were sadly lost. But they left me their business to do what I’d like with it. At the time, the lawyers told me it’d be more profitable to just
sell the business, as it is a lovely piece of land. But with a little help from Tooru, I decided to open this business under a new name, instead.”

“I’m sorry for your loss,” Asahi said quietly, but the wedding planner was quick to wave him off.

“It’s been eight years since the accident, and I’d like to think they’d be proud of what I’ve done.” Daichi admired the optimistic spin Suga gave his story. So many times, the cop had seen people become victims to the stress of their rough history. It became a crutch, and eventually an excuse for the crimes they committed. Suga, comparatively, had become a survivor. He kept his eyes forward, and never let his past drag him down. It was a respectable quality to have.

“They must be; this place is the best in the state,” Noya said, making his opinion of the venue well known. Suga seemed pleased with the praise, leading the men into the back door of the main building.

“I can’t take much of the credit; most of the magic of a wedding comes from my partners. Oikawa is a master at blending the needs of each side of the wedding, and making it a masterpiece. Yamaguchi tends to go above and beyond with his work, and puts his heart in every centerpiece and flower arrangement he makes. You’ll meet our cake specialist last, but before that I’d like to meet the two men responsible for capturing your special day. Our photography team takes care of your engagement photo and wedding pictures. You have the right to bring in your own photographer, of course, but I assure you that Kuroo and Kenma are the best in the business.”

“Kuroo? As in, Kuroo Tetsuro?” Tsukishima’s inquiry surprised the group, the blond keeping a straight face despite the strong stare from the lawyer. “He’s known in the photography circle. I believe he won a good amount of awards a few years back for his nature expose.”

“Kuroo is an acclaimed photographer, though he’ll never tell you himself,” Suga replied, moving down the hallway toward an open set of double doors.

“Why would someone like him work at a wedding venue?” The question came out rude, but Daichi could tell the lawyer (for once) wasn’t trying to be callous. He seemed genuinely confused, and Suga could only grin in response.

“Little Crows tends to draw in people with no real reason why. I like to think it’s the charm of the establishment, but— Kuroo! What are you doing to Kenma?!” Suga’s composure seemed to fray as the group entered the spacious room, and it was quick to see why. A tall man with black hair that flopped in every direction it could find was currently dragging a pile of blankets across the floor. It took a second for Daichi to realize there was an actual body buried in the mess, a disheveled mop
of outgrown blond peeking out. The dragged man was laying in his cocoon, and upon closer inspection, a pillow could be seen under the young man’s head. Was he actually trying to sleep through the move?

“Kenma’s too tired to walk, but you said he’s got to meet all the clients. We compromised.” The lazy smile of the tall man dripped with effortless seduction, and Daichi was starting to see Suga’s earlier claim of attractive employees was true. Each seemed to have their own spin on the word, ranging in connotation and style. Oikawa was mainstream sexy, the cookie-cutter that knew how to use what he was given. Yamaguchi didn’t ooze desire, but his cute face and quirky personality would attract people of all kinds. The newcomer was lazy-chic, as if being sultry was something he didn’t think about. And Sugawara... Daichi felt his stomach warm reflexively, and he stomped the feelings down before he could think about them. He focused on the conversation at hand, a rare frown marring the soft lips of the wedding planner.

“Kenma is twenty-four years old; he needs to stop playing video games until three am, especially when we’ve got guests.”

“I only played until one.” A soft voice came from the blankets, the man in question slowly lifting his head from the shelter to yawn. Rubbing one of his golden eyes, Kenma lifted what appeared to be a large photography book from his hiding spot. “I spent some time finishing this for you.”

“Good work, but maybe do this first next time?” Suga’s soft voice sounded more like a mother than a boss, the fair haired man crouching down to take the offered book. Kenma’s eyes were quick to drop to the floor at the suggestion, barely flinching when Kuroo dropped a hand onto his head and snickered.

“Getting scolded by Suga-san? You’re such a rebel, kitten.” Petting his partner like a cat, Kuroo lifted his gaze back to the men in front of him. “Suga’s probably already introduced us, but I’m Kuroo Tetsuro. The guy next to me is Kenma Kozume. My best friend’s the brains behind the operation. To put it simply, I shoot the pictures and he makes them look good. Though with how attractive this group is, it makes our job a hell of a lot easier. Oikawa wasn’t kidding about Code Periwinkle.”

“Oh God, please don’t,” Suga whispered, though Daichi seemed to be the only one who heard it. The wedding planner moved with the photo album to the coffee table while Kuroo supported his statement.

“I’m not kidding, this is a good looking wedding party. Kudos to the grooms.” Kuroo tipped an imaginary cap, to which Noya grinned and gave a thumbs up while following Suga.
“Go big or go home, right?”

“That’s the spirit! Though, we may have to edit Mr. Serious back there.” Kuroo’s thumb jerked toward Tsukishima, who made the point even more evident with his increased frown.

“Tsukishima is fine, thank you.” Like a mischievous cat, Kuroo’s eyes flashed with danger before he smirked.

“Now that’s a mouthful. I think we’ll have to brainstorm and come up with a nickname for you.”

“Please don’t.” The dry tone the blonde used showed his displeasure of the idea, but Kuroo paid it no attention. Instead, his playful eyes moved to Daichi, the cheshire grin growing.

“Now this looks like a man who can drink. You and beardie are not the lightweights at a party, are you? I got a little worried that Oikawa’s new playtoy was the only challenge, but you two restored my faith that we’ll have a good time.”

“Um, thanks?” Daichi wasn’t sure how to take the statement, though one thing stuck out from Kuroo’s assessment. Iwaizumi and Oikawa were either hitting it off (not likely) or his partner was wondering if pleading guilty to the assistant’s murder would be worth the reduced sentence (highly probable). He could only pray for his friend’s resolve to make it through the tour with everyone in one piece.

“Wow, these are so good.” Noya’s excitement was evident as he looked at the photo book Suga had presented. The wild child was bouncing on the couch, flipping through the pages and pointing out his favorites to his calmer fiancee next to him. Tsukishima stood behind the couple, his interest barely noticeable. Kuroo, hearing the praise, left his post near Daichi to talk to the couple. Finally, left alone, Daichi felt his shoulders droop as he leaned against the wall behind him.

“Sorry about that.” The voice that curled around his ear relaxed him more, his attention turning to Suga. The wedding planner took the empty space between him and the doorframe, his eyes staying on the group chatting in front of them. “Kuroo can make a strong first impression, but he’s harmless.”

“It seems you’ve got yourself a pretty lively business,” Daichi said, Suga’s laugh wrapping around the cop’s heart like a glove.

“I could say the same for you. Though you seem to manage them well; Asahi’s lucky to have such
a capable best man.” The reply caught Daichi by surprise, though Suga seemed prepared for the reaction with a wink and a sneaky smile. “That’s how I knew your name earlier. It’s a secret power of mine; I’m able to pick out the maid of honor or best man in a group. I always ask for the names of these roles because they’re the ones I work with the most. It’s best to get a good gauge on them as soon as possible. I’m also able to figure out if a party is going to be smooth sailing or rough waters within the first meeting.”

“Should I be concerned?” Daichi asked, Suga humming while he tapped his chin in pretend contemplation.

“I wouldn’t say that your group is a problem, but you won’t be boring. Especially once my team gets comfortable with them.” As if to prove the point, the pair watched Kuroo flick the back of Tsukishima’s ear, the lawyer’s tense shoulders and eye twitch showing the cameraman was getting to him. Daichi shook his head, wondering who was going to snap first; Iwaizumi or Tsukishima. If Suga was concerned about his employees he didn’t show it, the wedding planner’s elbow nudging the side of Daichi’s ribs. “Don’t look so worried.”

“The last thing I want to do is arrest my friends for murder.”

“Oh? You’re a cop?” Suga’s interest was piqued as Daichi nodded, his chest swelling with pride at the reaction.

“Me and Iwaizumi are officers for the Karasuno police department. Partners, actually. Been there for a couple of years now.”

“Interesting. I’ll be sure to keep that in mind, Officer Sawamura.” Daichi wasn’t a man who got embarrassed easily, blaming it on learned tolerance from his eccentric friends. Yet when Suga’s playful expression paired so perfectly with his teasing tone, the officer’s cheeks flared up in seconds. He tried to cover the bashful response with a cough, glancing away from the impish wedding planner to look at the ceiling.

“I don’t think it will help out much. I’m not that interesting; I’m just the one that makes sure nobody breaks the law or a bone. Tanaka’s the life of most parties.”

“Which is sure to encourage my group to get rowdy, but I tend to sway on the side of caution. I let my little crows have the fun, so I don’t mind when the best man or maid of honor is a little more grounded.” Suga paused in his statement, as if re-thinking his words before he continued. “Until it comes to the happiness of the bride and groom. Then I’m up in the clouds, and it’s Oikawa’s job to keep me realistic.”
“Did you go overboard on your own wedding?” Daichi could only hope his question didn’t sound as see through as it felt. Even before the conversation had shifted, the brunet had been looking for a way to casually ask about the man’s relationship status. But even in his head, he knew it was a lame attempt to sound casual. He interrogated people for a living! Shouldn’t a simple question be easy to ask without sounding desperate? If Iwaizumi was there, Daichi was sure he would have never been allowed to talk to another suspect again. Suga looked hesitant to answer, and Daichi wanted to smack himself for being so obvious.

“I’m single, though I’d like to believe that doesn’t determine my own expertise on wedding planning.” It was the first time that Suga had sounded defensive, and Daichi realized quickly the man’s hesitation had nothing to do with his pathetic questioning technique.

“Of course it doesn’t! I mean, even if you’re not married, you’ve got way more experience with this type of stuff than any of us. Hell, the only people here that are dating someone is Noya and Asahi; the rest of us are pretty much the lamest group you’ll ever meet.”

“You sure know how to promote yourself.” Suga hid his laugh behind his hand to be polite, but Daichi knew he deserved it. He was being an idiot. What was wrong with him? He hadn’t felt this nervous since he had kissed his first girlfriend in high school. He got shot at for a living and didn’t break a sweat. So what was it about the still chuckling wedding planner that deflated his courage in seconds? “I’m sorry for laughing.”

“I’m sorry for this entire conversation,” Daichi groaned, rubbing his hand over his face. The blocked vision made him miss Suga’s smile, though the officer felt the punch planted into his shoulder. He grunted under the force, eyes flickering back to the man who was pushing away from the wall.

“Either way, I look forward to working with you. Who knows, maybe I’ll figure out just why you’re all so ‘pathetic’, ” Suga said, giving one final look to the brunet before making his way toward the group on the couch. Daichi resisted the urge to slam his head into the wall behind him, though he did close his eyes and curse under his breath.

“What the hell was that?”

“We call it the ‘Suga phenomenon’.” A quiet voice supplied the answer Daichi didn’t expect to get, and his eyes dropped down to the floor to track where it had come from. Kenma’s attention was on a game console in his hands, the photographer sitting a few feet from where Suga and Daichi had been talking. Had he been there the entire time? How had Daichi missed him? Kenma seemed used to being overlooked, his shaggy blond hair tilting back when he lifted his head to
glance at Daichi. “Suga has the ability to make people fall head over heels for him with little awareness of what he’s doing.”

“I-It’s a little rude to listen in on someone’s conversation,” Daichi scolded, Kenma shrugging before he dropped his gaze back to the screen in front of him.

“Just so you know, Kuroo tends to punch first with his right hand.” The sentence was said like Kenma was giving directions to the bathroom and not some abstract version of a threat. Kenma’s strange behavior freaked out the officer a little more than he wanted to admit. Why would he tell Daichi that? Was Kuroo prone to random outbursts of anger? Did he have something against the police? Whatever the reason, Kenma didn’t seem inclined to explain himself to Daichi, leaving him in the uncomfortable dark.

“Daichi, hurry up or we’ll leave you behind!” Noya’s call of the officer’s name pulled his attention toward the other doorway, where his short friend was waving. He sent a final glance toward Kenma, but his attention was completely focused on whatever game he was now playing. Daichi slowly pushed away from the wall to follow his friends, not realizing that golden eyes had strayed to his back the second it was turned.

“What’s got you so chatty?” Kuroo’s voice was close now, and Kenma shrugged quietly. His eyes closed when he felt the blankets shifted around him, knowing Kuroo was going to pick him up before he felt the ground disappear behind him. “You take a liking to that guy or something?”

“Just a feeling,” Kenma mumbled, curling himself into the hold and yawning. “Can I sleep now?”

“Sure, kitten.” Kenma didn’t protest the nickname, too tired to remind Kuroo that he had his own feline tendencies. Instead, he let himself be brought back to the dark room he had napped in earlier, being lulled to sleep by the warm heartbeat against his arm.

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Hinata Shouyou had always been known as a social ambassador of sorts. If someone was new to his pre school teaching team, Hinata was the one assigned to show them around. He had more friends than he could remember, and made a lasting impression on every person he met. His sunny personality and high levels of energy were hard to forget, or at least that was what he was told. After bringing his car into Noya’s shop for a routine wheel rotation, he had ended up getting both mechanic’s phone numbers and was soon after introduced to the best friends he could ever ask for (Tsukishima was the exception, but even he had his cool moments). It seemed that with every person he talked to, Hinata could form a bond.
Meeting the members of *Little Crows* was no exception. Yamaguchi had been tense when meeting the group, but a few excited questions about his flowers had the florist relaxed and conversational. Kuroo had instantly dubbed him ‘shorty’, a name he didn’t appreciate despite the photographer’s carefree smile. Kenma had been a little harder to talk to, as the man practically buried himself in blankets and kept his attention on the game in his hands. So Hinata had sat next to him and asked loads of questions, only receiving answers that could be formulated in two words or less. Despite insufficient communication, Kenma seemed to fare better with Hinata’s presence than the others, and the shy photographer had even given the teacher his number before Oikawa was rushing them to the next part of the tour.

Hinata’s relationship with Oikawa was weird, though he blamed it all on the other man. The assistant had a terrible habit of flirting with everyone in the group. Tanaka took the compliments in stride, which seemed to be the best way to get the brunet to stop his playful teasing. Ennoshita couldn’t meet the assistant’s eyes from his embarrassment, never being the one to handle praise well. Iwaizumi, however, looked ready to strangle Oikawa. Hinata could understand, as the cop seemed to be the main target for sexualized comments. Each time Iwaizumi threatened bodily harm to their tour guide, it seemed to only fuel his flirting more.

But when Oikawa turned those pretty eyes on Hinata, he wasn’t sure what to feel. Out of the group, the teacher was the only one who was straight. Or, sorta straight. Until a month ago, Hinata had just assumed his focus on other men’s bodies was something like natural curiosity. When he noticed the toned shape of Iwaizumi’s biceps or acknowledged the appeal of Noya’s attractive eyes, he thought it was normal. Girls were always fawning over each other, and though he had never heard the same between guys, maybe they were just shy? He didn’t have much to go off of, as most of his friends swung from the other batter’s box.

But when a night that could only be described as ‘disastrous’ occurred a month ago, Yachi ask the question that changed everything.

“*Shouyou, is there a chance that you like men?*”

The thought had haunted him ever since. When socializing with his male colleagues, he felt his eyes lingering on their lips. He lacked the same concentration when talking to the female teachers, no matter how beautiful he considered them. When seeing a couple on the street or in public, Hinata’s eyes traveled to the man instead of his girlfriend. And when Oikawa had winked at him, like he knew about Hinata’s internal conflict, something spazzed in his stomach. It upset him so much, that the teacher hid behind Iwaizumi for the rest of the tour to keep away from Oikawa’s intuitive gaze.

“And here is where things get really fun.” Oikawa’s voice was full of excitement as he yanked open a sliding door in the basement, letting the metal crash as he practically skipped inside of the room. Hinata only went in once Iwaizumi did, but he was easily distracted from his earlier worry
when a sweet aroma encircled him. The kitchen was much warmer than the rest of the building, but it took little thought to find out why. Their tour guide walked through the wide room like he owned the place, his hands cupping over his mouth. “Tobio-kun! I’m here to see you!”

“Tooru, what have I told you about slamming that door?” Suga’s voice responded to the call, relieving the rest of the group while making Oikawa snap his fingers.

“I was hoping to get here before you.”

“Any reason why?” Suga asked, his look proving he knew the answer despite his assistant's innocent smile.

“I just wanted to see my favorite baker. Where is he, anyways?”

“Tooru.” The smile on the wedding planner’s face didn’t move, but the tone spoke enough volumes to make the brunet sigh and whirl on his heel.

“Fine.” The assistant moved over to Iwaizumi, the cop giving his tour guide a wary look in response. His body tensed when Oikawa slipped his arm around the other’s waist, their hips bumping together from the movement. “Iwa-chan is much cuter, anyways.”

“Will you get off me, shittykawa?!” If the assistant heard him, he didn’t comply, leaning his head against the growling man’s shoulder.

“I normally don’t let people give me pet names, but for you, I can make an exception. There are rules; you can't call me sugar. Sounds too much like Suga-san’s name. Honey is fine, though.”

“How about ‘dead’?”

“Having trouble in paradise?” Daichi’s humorous voice drew the red head’s attention to their right, seeing the other group was sitting at a table. Happy to see the familiar faces, Hinata rushed across the floor to get to the other group. “Hinata, careful!”

“Woah!” The teacher skidded to a stop when he nearly crashed into a cooling rack next to the
His eyes peered at the tower of little cakes, which was taller than him. The spongy chocolate desserts made Hinata’s mouth water. Though he was careful of his physique, he had always had a soft spot for cake. Chocolate, vanilla, or any other flavor didn’t make the difference. Frostings and fillings could only add to their perfection. And the perfectly shaped cakes in front of him felt like they were calling his name.

“As I was telling the other group, our baker is quite talented.” Suga’s soft voice made the teacher jump, glancing over to the smiling wedding planner. The others from his group were moving behind him to pick seats at the table, Suga guiding Hinata away from the cooling rack to sit in the chair in front of it. “Those cakes were made for a wedding tomorrow, so you won’t be able to taste them. Kageyama’s finishing up the separation of the samples right now, so please be patient, okay?”

“How many types of cake do you have?” Hinata’s question was rushed, eyes wide with excitement. The table was laughing at him, but the teacher didn’t mind. They knew about his sweet tooth and how much he had talked about the cake sampling part of the tour on the way to the venue. It had bummed him out that it was the last part of the tour, but now it felt completely worth it.

“Twenty.” A new voice came from the other side of the kitchen, and the second Hinata turned his head, his mouth went dry. Sharp eyes stared down at Hinata, their edge being emphasized by the lack of a smile. It wasn’t like he was frowning, either; it simply looked like the man had settled for neutrality. Dark hair was covering his forehead, the shape of his slim face smooth despite how intense his other features were. Hinata’s attention was focused on the color of the man’s eyes, wondering if he had ever seen a blue so dark before. They looked deep, focused and held more maturity than someone his age should have. Then the connection between their gazes broke as the man looked down to the trays he was holding. “Though for today, I’ve only given our three most popular choices.”

“Uh…” Hinata wanted to ask a hundred questions. His stomach wanted to know the flavors, the frostings, and how much he could eat. His heart, however, was on a completely different track. It wanted to know less about the spongy dessert now being handed to each of the guests sitting at the table and more about the man holding them. Like his name, which he was sure Suga and Oikawa had said and yet he couldn’t remember for the life of him. He wanted to know if he understood how rare his eye color was, and just how distracting it could be for someone like Hinata. And did he know that when he directed that stare back at him, Hinata’s heart did a weird flip? Or was it a punch in the stomach? The feelings were so muddled, that Hinata felt frozen while he tried to distinguish them.

“Are you going to take it?” His voice was quiet but solid, like the warning thunder before lightning struck. It felt overwhelming for a moment, and Hinata desperately wanted to quiet the hard pounding against his ribcage. The baker was going to notice; there was no way the noise drumming in his ears was going to be overlooked by the man now standing next to him. Like an ocean the man’s eyes rolled before something clinked in front of Hinata, the teacher jumping in his seat when realizing the baker had placed the plate of samples in front of him.
“Kageyama Tobio has been with our company for four years now, and has been in charge of hundreds of wedding cakes. He was one of the top ranked bakers of his class, and his love for his craft is evident in his skill.” Suga’s polished summary of Kageyama (Hinata had been smart enough to listen for his name) was full of pride as he sent a glance to the stiffened man beside him. Due to his pale skin, the red blush resting just under his eyes was evident to everyone at the table, though nobody was cruel enough to bring it up.

“Tobio-chan, you look so weird when you’re embarrassed!” Except Oikawa. Hinata’s eyes fell on the brunet, who had already swiped Iwaizumi’s fork and popped a piece of the red cake between open lips. His hum of approval showed he appreciated the taste of the treat, sticking the tip of his tongue out of the side of his mouth while he winked at the flushed baker. “Your red velvet cake is getting better, too.”

“It’d be perfect if you choked on it,” Iwaizumi muttered, snatching back the fork before Suga shook his head.

“Kageyama, would you please explain the spread you’ve created for them?”

“R-Right.” The small stutter was cute on the baker, who seemed nervous as he yanked on the collar of his shirt. Hinata had rested his head in his palm, watching the baker while trying to understand the fuzzy feeling in his gut. A nervous knot tightened in his stomach each time the soft spoken Kageyama skimmed his eyes Hinata’s way. “The cake on your left is a vanilla butter cake with a hazelnut buttercream filling and a chocolate ganache. The center sample is a red velvet cake with a chocolate mousse filling and vanilla frosting. And finally, the cake on your right is a pink champagne cake, filled with a rum infused custard and topped with whipped cream frosting. Please enjoy.”

“That all sounds fucking delicious,” Tanaka’s fork made quick work of the pieces of cake presented to him, Ennoshita simply shaking his head at his overzealous friend. Noya seemed more focused than ever, taking his time to poke his red velvet cake before slicing it in half to eat. The table was quiet except for utensils clinking against the dishes the cakes were presented on. Hinata’s stomach was ready to devour the sweet desserts in front of him, but his eyes struggled to stay on the same path. Instead, the teacher let his gaze peek from the corner of his eyes to the tall man watching them quietly. Kageyama’s lips were fixated in a frown, but from the way his fingers twitched in front of him, it was obvious the baker was nervous. It didn’t seem to come from his skill. The only time he had seemed confident was when explaining the complex intricacies of the cakes and their accessories.

Their eyes met again, blue narrowing instantly when catching Hinata watching him. The chilled glare made the shorter man’s spine shiver in nerves, yet it lost some of its edge when seeing
another shade of red darken Kageyama’s cheeks. Hinata blinked in surprise, his head tilting when considering a new explanation for the baker’s weird behavior. He had a few students at the start of every year that reacted the same way to Hinata when first meeting him. They would glare, refuse to speak to him, and would sometimes hide under their blanket or behind a favorite teddy bear from home. But the reason for this behavior was always the same; they were trying to hide how shy they were. Was the baker an introvert? From the way Suga had softened his speech when talking to Kageyama, Hinata was sure the facts supported his theory. The huge, intimidating baker now glaring at the wall to the side of him was just shy.

And for some reason, that thought made Kageyama Tobio kind of...cute?

“Hinata?” At Noya’s call of his name he glanced back to see the entire table was staring at him. Though he was never one to complain about attention, having so many stares focused on him was enough to make even Hinata squirm. Though some (Noya, Daichi, Suga) looked concerned, some less kind souls (Oikawa, Tsukishima) seemed to snicker over the dumb look Hinata was sure he was sporting. Noya pointed down to his plate, which looked as if the groom had licked it clean in appreciation. “You haven’t eaten any of your cake.”

“I haven’t?” Glancing down to confirm that yes, every piece was still intact on his plate, the teacher gave a far too loud laugh before he stabbed his fork into the center cake. “Right, I should—”

“Did something interest you, chibi-chan?” Brown eyes gazed at him with curiosity, though the curve of Oikawa’s smile showed the assistant knew far more than he was letting on. In a panic to keep himself from having to answer, the teacher shoveled the cake into his mouth, filling his cheeks with the delicious sweets in seconds. If his mouth was full, then he wouldn’t have to answer Oikawa. The quick thinking on his part seemed smart, until a devious gleam sparked in the pretty man’s eyes. With mocked innocence, Oikawa tapped his cheek as he pondered out loud. “I wonder what it is that bothered our little cherub so much. It would have to be something handsome to distract him from the cake that he’s been babbling about throughout the entire tour.”

“Hinata could be distracted by paint drying.” Though Tsukishima was trying to insult Hinata, the teacher could almost kiss him for tossing out an answer to Oikawa’s teasing. But the assistant didn’t seem deterred by the lawyer’s statement, his eyes moving casually toward a still tense baker.

“I bet I could come up with a few guesses.” There were many things that Hinata was comfortable with. He had been thrown up on more times than he could count, dealt with several kids peeing themselves, and even had a few hospital trips involving kids swallowing all sorts of things. His instincts normally kicked in for moments like that, and he didn’t have to think about what to do. It was all natural. When his friends were about to get into a fight, he was ready to jump in at a moment’s notice (despite his small stature and lack of intimidation). His mind always took longer to catch up to his body’s decisions, though they normally turned out to be the right choice.
So Hinata hadn’t noticed his body shooting out of the chair, ready to flee the scene to escape the situation. Having Oikawa dissect his interest in Kageyama while Hinata wasn’t even sure if he liked men that way had felt dangerous, and his instinct had told him to run away. And he had been okay with that plan, until one final glance to the baker had made him realize the eyes he had been staring at earlier were already on him. Wide, full of curiosity and surprise, the look was something Hinata had been sure couldn’t expose itself on the stoic man’s face. But damn, did it look good on him. The rush of pleasure that coiled in Hinata’s stomach tripped up his feet and had him slamming into a wall.

Except when he heard a loud crash behind him, he realized it wasn’t a wall at all.

“Oh my God.” Suga’s voice was soft, full of disbelief of the disaster that Hinata had just created. The teacher stared at the tipped over cooling rack in front of him, the trays of lava cakes scattered around the kitchen. A quick glance alone estimated over thirty cakes were now smooshed on the floor, but he wasn’t sure how many were still trapped under the tipped over metal. Though his shoulder was burning from the angle it had smacked into the rack, Hinata couldn’t make himself react to the pain. His eyes stayed fixated on the mess, as if staring at it long enough would make it disappear. But no matter how hard he stared, the cakes refused to fix themselves.

“You…” He turned his head as a shadow casted itself over him, Hinata paling at the rage contorting the baker’s face. He let out a yelp when his shirt was snagged, easily lifting him off the ground even as he flailed his arms.

“W-Wait! I didn’t mean to!”

“You idiot! Do you know how long it took me to make those?!” Kageyama shook him with each word, swishing Hinata’s overstuffed belly and making the teacher feel queasy. The rocking motion was finally stopped when Daichi and Suga separated the two, Hinata quick to hide behind Daichi when seeing the killer glare Kageyama was still giving him over Suga’s shoulder. It was his desire to look away from the baker that made Hinata realize they were now alone in the kitchen. He wasn’t sure where the others had disappeared to, but he was thankful that the crowd was gone. The last thing he needed was the snickers of his friends and Tsukishima’s scathing comments on his stupidity.

“Calm down, Kageyama. Hurting Hinata isn’t going to bring your cakes back.” The calm tone of Suga’s voice helped soothe the teacher’s frayed nerves, and he only peeked a glance back up to the baker once hearing a slow sigh coming from the taller man.

“I know.” Kageyama’s voice had cooled, despite the still fisted hands by his sides.
“I apologize for the trouble and damage we’ve caused during the walk through. And Shouyou does too, right?” The stern look from Daichi had Hinata instantly bowing his head, practically kissing the floor by how far he bent.

“I’m so sorry!” His eyes were squeezed shut as he waited for a scolding or at least an insult from the wedding planner. So when a hand dropped onto his shoulder, Hinata tensed and prepared himself for the worst.

“It’s okay, we all are old enough here to understand mistakes happen.” Slowly Hinata peeked his head up to see Suga’s smile, knowing he didn’t deserve it. He couldn’t bring himself to look at Kageyama while he rose back to his full height, so he returned the smile at the owner as brightly as he could.

“And since we are all adults, it should be an easy fix.” Daichi’s voice was tinted with a tone that he used whenever he put on his ‘dad’ hat, and Hinata tried not to wince as he whirled around to face the cop.

“Fix?” In response, Daichi nodded his head and then turned back to the mess on the floor.

“For starters, Hinata will be solely responsible for cleaning up the kitchen while we finish the meeting upstairs.” That was expected, and Hinata felt himself nod at the stipulation. He hated cleaning, but he didn’t see a way out of doing it. So he waited patiently to hear the second part of his punishment, knowing that Daichi had already decided what it would be. Sure he was an adult, but everyone knew that Daichi’s word was law. “And since I’m sure those ingredients cost the business money, we’ll be offering his services every other week in the kitchen to make up for it.”

“What?!” Hinata’s voice was mirrored by the baker, the two sending each other a glance before Suga’s cheery voice flowed between them.

“That sounds like a great plan. Kageyama is always working so hard down here alone; I think having some help now and then will do him good.” As if Hinata and Kageyama were their children, the two older man shook on the deal. It was obvious that Kageyama was not a fan of the plan, but he stayed politely quiet while Suga turned toward Hinata with a smile he was sure melted the hearts of many. “It’s great to have you on board, Shouyou.”

“O-oh, yes. Thank you!” By the time Hinata realized he had thanked Suga for trapping him in Kageyama’s clutches, the wedding planner was walking the cop out of the eerily silent kitchen.
The heavy door shut with authority, as if reminding the teacher that this was no nightmare. Nervously he looked back to the baker, sure that he was going to get another death glare and maybe some unpleasant words. To his surprise, the baker was on the move, opening a small closet in the corner of the kitchen. Hinata hesitantly moved across the floor, nearly yelping when the tall man turned to face him without warning. Instantly his hands were in front of him, but his fingers grasped something colder than skin. When finally reopening his eyes, the teacher was met with Clorox wipes and a trash bag.

“Clean up the lava cakes, then wash the cooling racks. Have them done before I’m finished with the first batch of cakes.” Kageyama’s voice was even keeled and firm, showing none of his earlier frustration. He didn’t wait for a response from Hinata before he was moving again, this time heading toward the fridge. Hinata didn’t want to admit his eyes were following the baker or admiring the softer edges to his eyes when he glanced through the contents of ingredients. Even after the man was on the brink of strangling him, Hinata couldn’t deny that he was eccentrically handsome. It made a warm buzz sit in his stomach, like he had taken a few small sips of sake just to relax after a long day of work.

Hinata wanted to dissect the feeling more, but when he saw Kageyama starting to pull out of the refrigerator, he knew he needed to begin cleaning. He had been told to finish before the cakes were done, and the baker didn’t look in the mood to be tested. So Hinata turned away from his newest interest to the disaster he had pushed out of his mind earlier. A mess that looked a heck of a lot bigger than it originally seemed.

Yup, he was going to need some more Clorox.

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“This place is perfect; I love it.” Noya’s stamp of approval made Suga smile, the wedding planner taking a seat across from the pleased couple. The fair haired man had instructed Oikawa to show the few finer details of the main building to the wedding party, leaving only the grooms and the two best men. Tanaka, who sat with an arm tossed around his short friend, bobbed his head with a grin.

“Hell yeah! This place is awesome, dude. You’d have to be nuts not to come here.”

“We’d be honored to host your wedding here,” Suga replied, his arm brushing Daichi’s when leaning forward to grab his planner. He paused in his motion to send a glance to Asahi, his smile softening when seeing the taller man tense. “Though we understand if you and your fiancee need time to talk it over. This is a very important decision.”
“Oh, right!” Noya’s frantic tone was followed by a rushed touch to the writer’s hand, the mechanic’s guilt plastered on his face. “I jumped the gun again, huh? I didn’t even ask if you-”

“No, it’s okay!” Asahi’s quick reply didn’t sway the frown on Noya’s face, his hand squeezing the hand in his.

“This is our wedding; you get a say, too. I just get so excited thinking about being your husband, and then I go making decisions without even seeing what you want!” The frustration in the mechanic’s tone pained his fiancee, who leaned down to try and catch his lover’s gaze.

“Yuu,” Asahi mumbled gently, using his free hand to cradle the crestfallen face of his fiancee. “I know how much this wedding means to you, and I’m excited too. This venue is beautiful. I’d be happy if this is where you pick. But even if you chose a cardboard box, I’d still be happy. Because at the end of the day, I get to marry you. That’s all the matters to me.”

“Azumane!” Wavering lips and bright eyes greeted the writer’s earnest admittance, the small man scampering to yank his fiancee down to kiss. Tanaka laughed while Daichi rolled his eyes, his smile contradicting the motion of his shaking head. If there was one thing that never failed, it was these two’s ability to forget the rest of the world when looking at each other. But maybe that was what happened when you found your other half. The cop laughed at the large blush on Asahi’s face when Noya finally pulled away, his excited gaze shifting to the smiling wedding planner. “We don’t need to talk; we want to get married here. Asahi deserves the best, and that’s you.”

“Perfect; I’m happy to welcome you to Little Crows.” Hazel eyes flickered down to the calendar in front of him. “Now, was there a certain month you wanted to look at? December is normally a pretty busy month, but January-”

“July 8th.” Suga lifted his head at the precise date, barely able to cover his shock when Noya nodded once. “It’s the day we met, and my fiance is a fan of summer. It’s a Saturday, and it’s the perfect time of the year to get married.”

“Jesus Noya,” Daichi muttered, rubbing his temple as he glanced over to the man next to him. Suga’s fingers twitched against the planner in his lap as Noya tilted his head, not noticing the slight tension in the wedding planner’s shoulders. Disliking the strained smile Suga was wearing, Daichi shook his head and gave his friend a stern look. “You didn’t tell him your short timeframe before the walk through?”

“I thought it’d be fine.”
“That’s not how it works.”

“It isn’t?” Tanaka asked, seeming just as surprised by the information as Noya. Daichi gave a steady shake of his head, repeating the information Yui had given him the last time they talked.

“Weddings normally take six to nine months to plan; you’re giving them three. Even for a professional, that’s asking a lot.”

“But it’s not impossible.” Suga’s sudden declaration drew the attention to him, his smile returning to its bright shine as he tapped his open planner. “And we have the date open. If you’re willing to pay a little extra, I could keep the days before the wedding open to give us space for last minute fixes. It’s a tight fit, but I promise we can do it.”

“Really? You mean it?” Noya’s excitement burst through the room as Suga nodded, the groom quickly shaking the hand extended to him. “You really are the best!”

“It’s nothing,” Suga dismissed, diverting the pair’s attention to the paperwork they would be signing. Daichi stayed silent for the rest of the meeting, letting Noya and Asahi enjoy their moment.

But he couldn’t help but wonder if Suga’s promise was too good to be true.

Chapter End Notes

So plan a whole wedding in three months...Suga's got this. I think. Err...

What's going to happen during the planning? How will Kageyama and Hinata get along in the kitchen? What will the other members think of Suga's promise? And which couple will crack first? All this and more coming up, so give me your kudos and comments!

Next Chapter- Flirting for Dummies
Chapter Summary

Suga and Daichi really need new friends.

Chapter Notes

Hello hello on this beautiful Saturday afternoon! I hope that you’ve all had a great week, and if not, let some HQ love change that tune! <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Remember that time I said you couldn’t say no to ridiculous demands?” Despite Oikawa’s cheeks being stuffed with crab rangoon, his smug eyes expressed what his occupied mouth couldn’t.

“You should have seen them; there was no way you would have said no,” Suga argued, lifting his arm so Yamaguchi could slip under to snag the box of lo-mein. The team was stuffed in Suga’s office, Kageyama taking refuge on Kuroo and Kenma’s couch while Suga sat with Yamaguchi and Oikawa on either side of him. His laptop was resting on the edge of the table, which was littered with several boxes of chinese food. It was Suga’s way of bribing his team to stay late Monday night, despite the hectic weekend they had endured. But knowing the limited time they had for Noya and Asahi’s wedding, the meeting couldn’t be put off.

“We’ve done it before; member the 80s themed one? We put that awesome wedding together in the same time. I for one like the challenge.” Kuroo’s confidence was met with a flung spare rib from the other couch, the assistant smirking when the food hit Kuroo’s cheek.

“That’s cause you get the fun job. Try dealing with the hysterical mother of the bride while sewing the jealous sister into a hideous green bridesmaid dress that even Madonna couldn’t rock.”

“Luckily the wedding party is all men,” Yamaguchi supplied, hoping to ease some of the worry in the group. He trapped a few noodles between his chopsticks as he spoke. “Unless Noya-san has a huge expectation of flower arrangements, I can try to help out when you need me, Oikawa-san.”

“Well aren’t you just the sweetest little petunia.” Oikawa’s fingers reached to pinch Yamaguchi’s cheek, though a small slap from Suga kept the mischievous fingers on his side of the couch.
“We’ve all got a lot of responsibility these next two weeks, so I’d like to over what we should focus on. The main thing that needs to be done is the wedding invitations; Noya and Asahi have agreed to send their engagement photos out with their invitations, and to skip the ‘save-the-date’ cards. With the timeframe only being four months, there’s little need for two styles of invitations.”

“But that does put a time crunch on editing.” Kenma gave his quiet input, Kuroo quick to put his unease to rest while handing him a stick of chicken teriyaki.

“Then I guess I’ll have to take a picture that won’t need much work, huh?” Kuroo’s grin was met with a bored sigh, though small fingers took the offered food. Once sure that Kenma was eating, the photographer turned back to the wedding planner with a new question. “Have you talked to them about what they want to do for music? You know Bokuto and Akaashi are always a great go to if they’re not doing a live band.”

“I plan to call Noya tomorrow and set up a meeting to go over things like the guest list, music, and some of the other smaller bits of information. I’ll suggest them if the topic comes up.”

“Are we forgetting that getting in Iwa-chan’s pants is a top priority for me?”

“What part of him threatening your life implies he wants to sleep with you?” Kageyama’s blunt question received a dismissive wave from Oikawa, who then sent a sly glance toward Yamaguchi.

“Sometimes they just like to play hard to get. Isn’t that right, flower child?” His face bursting in color under his freckles, Yamaguchi nearly dropped his chopsticks as he hurried to shake his head.

“T-That’s not what hap-happened with Tsukishima!”

“Tsukishima?” Kuroo popped back into the conversation, snapping his fingers. “Damn, I forgot to give him a nickname!”

“Oh, now that sounds like a priority.” Oikawa supported Kuroo’s slight derailing of the meeting, Suga sighing while he alternated between typing and eating his orange chicken.

“You have thirty seconds, then we’re getting back on track.” Oikawa and Kuroo didn’t waste the
opportunity, bouncing ideas off each other.

“Salt monster.”

“Sassy pants.”

“Tsukisnark.”

“Snarkasauros.”

“Blond bombshell.” Oikawa blinked at Kuroo’s suggestion, the photographer shrugging with a side grin. “What? I have a thing for blonds.”

“Twenty seconds,” Suga warned over his laptop, Kageyama watching the older men awkwardly. Kenma paid neither any mind as he snagged some rice off Kuroo’s plate, Yamaguchi’s body stiff as a board throughout the conversation.

“Fine fine. Hmm…” Kuroo rubbed his chin for a moment before his eyes travelled through the room, the lazy gaze finding the florist. “Alright, Yams, pick a really cute name for Tsukishima.”

“Oh, good idea, Kuroo! A cute nickname from a cute flower!”

“M-Me?” Yamaguchi’s eyes widened at the attention, his words fumbling when both men nodded. “But I can’t…a nickname? What would I even-”

“Five seconds.”

“Don’t overthink it, Yamaguchi,” Kageyama said, attempting to help his fellow co-worker. The baker’s suggestion didn’t quell the sudden panic in Yamaguchi, disliking the attention enough to shout the first thing that came to mind.

“Ts-Tsukki!”
“Tsukki?” Kuroo repeated, his eyes lighting with pleasure as he nodded. “Tsukki!”

“Now that’s a nickname,” Oikawa purred, his smile making Yamaguchi feel like he had somehow dug himself into a hole he hadn’t intended to.

“Will you two focus now?” Suga scolded the older two adults of the group, his frown tugging at his lips while he pointed to the laptop. “We’ve got a lot of planning to do for this wedding, and the last thing we need is you two making it harder on the grooms.”

“You know, when you get like this, you drop on my list of men I’d like to fuck before I die.” Oikawa’s dry response had Kuroo snickering, Suga groaning before he pressed his palm to his face.

“Are you worried about Sawamura-san?” Kenma’s curious question froze the group, the bored man taking a giant bite of food before he mumbled his next set of words. “You seemed to be when you were talking with him on the tour.”

“Wait a minute-”

“Koushi, you animal!” Oikawa’s loud gasp made Suga roll his eyes, praying his cheeks wouldn’t flush during his continued explanation.

“You all know I like to get to know the best man-”

“You called him ‘Officer Sawamura’.” From how quick Kenma threw Sugawara under the bus, it was obvious he wasn’t over being forced to get up for the early walkthrough.

“Were you trying to role play with him?” At the assistant’s accusation, Suga groaned and shook his head.

“He’s a cop, Tooru. He was telling me that he and Iwaizumi work for the police department.”
“Oh.” There was a pause, though the silence didn’t last long. “Iwa-chan’s a cop?!”

“Does that bother you?” Yamaguchi’s innocence shined again at the question, Oikawa’s devilish smirk contrasting his co-worker poetically.

“Define ‘bother’.”

“Let’s not get sidetracked from the important question; did you get the boy in blue’s number?” Kuroo asked, the wedding planner nodding.

“His and Tanaka’s. As I do with every best man or maid of honor. So get your heads out of the gutter.”

“Daichi is a good looking guy. Kudos to you if you two hook up.” Kuroo gave a seal of approval that Suga never asked for, while Oikawa sighed and leaned against his co-worker’s shoulder.

“Looks like you’ll be the first one in forever to get some good sex.”

“You slept with the bride’s sister. Yesterday,” Kageyama stated, flinching when Oikawa’s eyes flashed over to him.

“Aw, Tobio-kun. I didn’t know you kept such a close eye on me.”

“I walked into the coat room while you were having sex.”

“Tooru!” Suga’s obvious displeasure was cut off when his phone chimed, notifying the wedding planner of an incoming text. The room fell silent, as if someone had just admitted to murder. For reasons Suga couldn’t understand he flushed, though he had little time to think it over. Oikawa was on the move, and the wedding planner knew his intended target. “Don’t even think about it!”

A wrestling match was far beneath Suga’s maturity level, but it was free game for his assistant. The pretty brunet was not known for playing fair, so Suga wasted no time in tackling Oikawa to the floor and securing his wrists. The cheering from Kuroo on his couch were enough to embarrass Suga, yet he didn’t let it distract him from the wiggling man beneath him. Oikawa was way more
flexible than he should be. The wedding assistant even tried to bend his foot to grab the phone, Suga limiting his mobility by wrapping his leg around the muscled thigh and yanking it down. Oikawa’s squirming wasn’t easy to control, and Suga nearly bit his tongue when the bony shoulder hit into his chin. From the couch Kuroo was now laughing, and the wedding planner was surprised he was not fending two people away. But the photographer seemed content with watching the two on the floor, Oikawa whining as he struggled.

“I just want to take a peek-” Oikawa’s innocent tone did the exact opposite of what the brunet desired. Suga tightened his hold on Oikawa’s wrists, giving a quick glance to Yamaguchi.

“Can you grab that off the table for me, please?” He was amazed at how composed he was in asking the florist for help while restraining his childish assistant.

“S-Sure.”

“Traitor!” Oikawa huffed out when Yamaguchi obtained the phone, keeping it out of harm's way while Suga finally scampered off the brunet to retrieve his device. Crossing his arms and legs once sitting up on the floor, Oikawa sent the florist a mean look. “I’ll get you back for your betrayal, buttercup. Your petals are numbered.”

“Stop being dramatic,” Suga chided, though his attention had drifted to the text he had gotten. It had been from Daichi, which meant the wrestling match with Tooru was worth it.

Daichi: Good evening, this is Sawamura Daichi. On behalf of my group, I wanted to thank you for the tour. We all look forward to working with your company.

He’s so formal, Suga thought, his smile small as he typed a simple reply.

Sugawara: I’m glad you enjoyed our facility. I'll be sure to keep in touch with you when I set some definitive plans with Noya and Asahi. Don’t hesitate to text me with any questions! =)

Tucking the phone into his pocket to keep it from prying eyes, Suga watched Oikawa grumble his way back onto the couch while Yamaguchi started to close up some of the boxes of food.

“I still can’t believe Hinata managed to knock so many of the lava cakes over. He’s so little.”
Yamaguchi’s observation made Kageyama scoff,stabbing a little harder than necessary into a spare rib on his plate.

“I can only imagine what other disasters he’s going to make for me.”

“Don’t be so pessimistic; this is a great opportunity for you to be a little more social.” When seeing Kageyama start to respond, Suga amended his statement. “Someone outside of the people in this room.”

“It’s just until the wedding’s over, right?” When Suga nodded, Kageyama let out a soft sigh and tapped his lower lip with his chopsticks. “That’s not too long, I suppose.”

“Shouyou is nervous, too.” Kenma was back to playing on his game console, but he seemed to understand the attention was on him when he self-consciously brushed his hair behind his ear.

“You texting the shrimp?” Kuroo asked, smirking when Kenma casually shrugged.

“He plays the same online game as me.”

“Should I be jealous that my best friend is getting stolen?”

“Don’t you enjoy the company of Tsukishima as well?” The reply made Kuroo blink, though he recovered quickly with a grin and a secure arm over Kenma’s shoulders.

“Tsukki’s fun to tease, but he doesn’t hold a candle to you, kitten.” And like the aforementioned animal, Kuroo rubbed his cheek against the top of Kenma’s head. The editor didn’t look up from his game, though the way his shoulders relaxed at the affection was evident. Suga watched the two interact quietly, a sigh building in his chest. Though Kenma and Kuroo claimed to be just friends, it was obvious that there was more. Kuroo was always open with his affection for the smaller man, claiming the two had always been this way. Kenma may have shied away from most, but Kuroo was the exception. Whether it was physical or mental, Kenma let Kuroo comfort him. If something became overwhelming for the editor, Kuroo was always there as his shield. Kuroo did it without being asked; it was just how their relationship worked. In return, Kenma never judged his friend. While others tried to group him as one type of person, Kenma simply understood Kuroo for everything he was and wasn’t. When he wanted to be serious and sultry, Kenma treated him the same as when he was wacky and immature. He took Kuroo in every shape and form, which was something the photographer valued more than words could express.
But sometimes, Suga was sure he saw something other than friendship in the pair’s touches and looks.

“Um, Suga-san?” Yamaguchi gave a small smile as he lifted his planner, pointing to a blank Thursday. “I can meet with Asahi and Noya on the 13th, if they’re free.”

“They are self-employed, so they’ll have more availability than our average couple,” Suga answered, turning his attention to the calendar he had been working on. “If I can meet with them Thursday, I can get their main information down. Kuroo, are you and Kenma free Monday for the photos?”

“We’ve got back to back weddings this weekend, but our Monday is blank, right?” Kuroo asked, Kenma pausing his game to pull up the calendar on his phone.

“Mhm. If we push the weekend wedding’s edits to Thursday, I could finish Noya and Asahi’s photos for Tuesday,” Kenma answered, not sounding opposed to the idea.

“Monday works for me,” Kuroo agreed, Suga plugging in the information in his computer before turning to Oikawa.

“You and I will start on the invitations ideas on Tuesday. These, along with the engagement photos, will have to be mailed out by Friday.”

“How busy are we that week for weddings?” The assistant asked, Suga’s smile bright once looking at the schedule.

“We’ve got a lull between Tuesday and Saturday that week. Any work you guys can get ahead on, I suggest doing it then. Yamaguchi, I’ve got you set up for next Thursday with Noya and Asahi-”

“Um, can you ask them to bring Tsukki with them?” The odd request made Suga pause in his typing, the florist quick to vocalize his defense. “It’s not a personal thing, I promise!”

“I’ll be happy to pass the word on for you,” Suga replied, placing the request into his notes.
"Is there anything you need from me?" Kageyama’s question was met with a shake of Suga’s head.

"Besides your appointment with Shouyou wednesday, you’ve just got the cakes for the upcoming weddings."

"Right. Wednesday." Kageyama looked to the window of the office at the repeated information, his nose barely scrunching in annoyance. Suga closed the laptop after entering the final information, feeling his back relax from mounting stress.

"Well, that’s everything then. Good job everyone."

"Team hug!" Oikawa’s cheerful call didn’t give Suga or Yamaguchi time to prepare for Oikawa’s weight, the planner flinging his arms around them. The squeak from the florist was overshadowed by Kuroo’s laugh, the tailor lifting the head he had buried into Suga’s shoulder to glare at the other couch. “Team. Hug."

"Right, right." Kuroo waited until Kageyama tried to move from the couch to slap his hand hard into the baker’s back, making the lanky man stumble forward. The lack of grace gave Oikawa opportunity to snatch his flailing wrist, yanking him into the pile. Kuroo got no resistance from Kenma, who knew his fate even if he tried to struggle. Once snatching his editor into his arms, Kuroo casually walked over to the couch before plopping right in the middle of the pile. How the six managed to cram on the three person couch was a feat only Oikawa could achieve, the assistant seeming content with the awkward way Kageyama was pressed between his chest and the arm rest.

"To the best team ever!" Oikawa cheered happily, Suga squirming away from the elbow planted into his rib.

"I am surrounded by crazy people,” the wedding planner announced, laughing when the team protested all at once.

They were not normal, but they were his, and Suga wouldn’t trade them for the world.

~**~
There was something special about starting the morning with a good run. Daichi’s sweat dripped down the side of his face as he jogged down the hill, the path now basking in the first rays of morning light. The happy barking from Sugar sounded in front of him, the white dog’s tail wagging with excitement.

“Even your dog is telling you to pick up the pace.” Iwaizumi was not human. Sure, he sweat like normal mortals, but that did not explain his incredible stamina. Daichi may have been able to outrun him in small dashes, but even that wasn’t a guarantee. Iwaizumi had the durability of a horse. Even after their five mile run, Daichi’s co-worker kept a steady pace.

“What are you *made* of?” Daichi groaned, forcing his tired legs to reach the park that Iwaizumi had stopped in. Sugar was eager to get off her leash, Daichi bending down to let the canine free. In seconds Sugar was sprinting toward the pond, chasing the ducks in the water. Both men found a familiar bench by the waterside, Daichi closing his eyes and letting out a tired sigh.

“What are you gonna do when your mutt actually catches one of those ducks?” Iwaizumi asked, Daichi’s shrug weak.

“You like duck soup?”

“Pass.” The serious tone from his friend caused Daichi to snicker. Truth be told, Daichi enjoyed Iwaizumi’s company. He could have a mouth on him when necessary, but he wasn’t a rude guy. He became a cop because he wanted to help people, not to abuse the power like others they knew. Iwaizumi was also a good partner, having Daichi’s back without question. They were both leaders by nature, but respected the other enough to discuss a decision that needed to be made. The shorter man did have smaller fuse than Daichi, but it was never something that affected their job. Iwaizumi knew how to control himself, so long as it didn’t involve a certain wedding assistant.

Speaking of which...

“How goes the good fight with Oikawa?”

“I don’t know how that pain in the ass got my information, but I’m seriously debating changing my number. And my name.” If Daichi had been worried of Oikawa’s intent in texting his partner, he might have agreed. But after getting a glimpse of the messages the flirty brunette was sending, Daichi knew he was harmless.
“He’d probably stop if you didn’t answer.” Daichi’s suggestion for his friend got a miffed snort in reply.

“Yeah, I tried that.”

“And?” Iwaizumi didn’t give a verbal reply, but the sudden redness of his ears gave Daichi the information he needed. “Ah.”

“Like I said, a pain in the ass.” The urge to question the location of Iwaizumi’s “pain” was tempting, but the ringing of his phone distracted him. He didn’t bother to look at the caller ID, the only person up this early being his boss.

“Officer Sawamura speaking.”

“Oh, you weren’t kidding about the cop thing.” A voice much lighter than Ukai’s floated through the air, Daichi nearly jerking off the bench in surprise. Iwaizumi cocked his eyebrow at the motion, Daichi clearing his voice before answering.

“Suga?”

“Good morning, Daichi.” There was a pause between them, Suga quick to pick up on the tension. “I’m sorry, were you expecting a phone call from someone else? I can always check in later.”

“No!” Daichi shouted a little louder than needed, his hand tightening on the phone while he shook his head. “No, I wasn’t waiting on anyone. Nobody really calls me unless it’s work or Tanaka explaining how he and Noya blew up another toaster oven.”

“Is this you highlighting your lack of dating again? Because by now, I think I believe you.” He just couldn’t catch a break. The cop took a slow breath, hoping to stop himself from saying anything else embarrassing. This was already turning into a trainwreck of a conversation, and it had barely lasted a minute. “Anyways, I called to let you know that Noya and Asahi are planning to come here on the 6th to discuss some of the essentials for the wedding. As part of working with the wedding party, we try to have the best man and maid of honor come to these meetings. Tanaka will be covering the shop for Noya, so he’ll be unable to attend. Would you be free that night, at seven?”

“That’s a Thursday night, right? At seven?” Daichi peered over to Iwaizumi, who was already
looking at the calendar on his phone while giving his partner a thumbs up. Sometimes, Iwaizumi was a god send. “Yeah, I should be out of work by then.”

“Great!” Though being cordial with Daichi was a part of his job, the cop noticed a slight change in the tone Suga now used. “That’s...really great.”

“Yeah?” Daichi asked, feeling his stomach squeeze at the laugh from the other side of the phone.

“Yeah.” Suga finally controlled his giggles, Daichi’s lips twitching as the wedding planner tried to steady his breathing. “So thursday?”

“It’s a date.” The words rolled out of his mouth before he could think twice, though his spine seemed to catch on far before his brain when it seized up. From the corner of his eye, he could clearly see Iwaizumi smothering his snort with the back of his hand, directly affecting the color of his face.

“I’m looking forward to seeing you, Daichi. Bye.” Daichi barely muttered his own form of goodbye before he hung up. The cop stared at the flashing name on his phone before dropping the device onto his lap.

“Smooth, Casanova.” Daichi didn’t answer the sarcastic statement, Iwaizumi eager to continue. “I’ve heard better flirting from a fourth grader.”

“I know,” Daichi groaned, his palms pressing into his eyes to hide his own shame. “I just...Suga just makes me nervous, I guess.”

“Cause you think he’s hot?”

“No.” There was a pause, and Daichi sighed before slumping against the bench. “Okay, yes. I think Sugawara Koushi is extremely attractive. And it’s been awhile since I’ve really been interested in someone, so I have no clue how to act around him.”

“What’s wrong with just being you?” Iwaizumi’s genuine sound of confusion made Daichi glance over to him, the calm cop watching Sugar dash back into the water. “You’re a good guy, Sawamura. You don’t really need to act like anything but yourself. Just treat Suga like a friend and the guy will probably fall head over heels with you before the bouquet toss.”
“It’s easy for you to say; you’ve already got Oikawa drooling over you.” When Iwaizumi snorted at the remark, Daichi smiled and poked his elbow into his scowling friend. “Come on, you’re going to tell me you’re not the least bit interested in him?”

“If you mean I want to arrest him for stalking and sexual harassment, then I’m very interested.”

“Don’t give him any ideas; some guys like being handcuffed.” Daichi laughed at the disgusted look of his friend, shrugging his shoulders to show his lack of judgement. “To each their own.”

“Oikawa’s hot, but it’s pretty obvious he’s a playboy. The last thing I need in my life is someone like that.”

“But Oikawa doesn’t seem the type to just go away on his own.”

“I can handle him.” The simple response was enough to placate Daichi, who let his eyes fall back on Sugar’s energetic form. The dog was no longer pure white, but a mixture of brown and the cream color the dog’s fur took on whenever he dipped into dirty water. A bath was inevitable, and Daichi could only hope she’d dry off before they got into the apartment.

“Good luck with that.” There was silence for a few seconds before a random thought came over Daichi. “Wait. Are they really going to do a bouquet toss?”

“You never know with those two.”

“If they do, who throws it?”

“Noya, though Tanaka will probably get involved somehow. Their bromance is scary.” There wasn’t a question in Iwaizumi’s tone, and a side glance from both partners was all that was needed for Daichi to agree. Noya may have loved Asahi to the moon and back, but Tanaka was the other half to his weird puzzle. “Though I don’t know who’d want to catch it.”

“Doesn’t matter; they’d aim it at Tsukishima.”
Daichi swore that Iwaizumi couldn’t stop laughing the entire run back home.

~**~

“Kageyama, it couldn’t have been that bad.” Suga’s soft reassurance did little to change the irritated look on his baker’s face, both men occupying Suga’s office late Thursday night.

“Why can’t he help Yamaguchi with his flowers? Or Kenma? They’re friends; he said it 100 times.”

“I think that’s an exaggeration,” Suga said, though Kageyama’s look proved he thought his estimate was accurate. “Did he break something? I just want to understand why you’re having such a problem with his assistance.”

“No but he…” Kageyama’s sharp eyes dropped to stare at his own feet, his fingers nervously tangling in front of him. “He just kept staring at me.”

“Staring?” Suga repeated, trying his best to hide his smile as Kageyama nodded.

“And he kept asking me weird questions. Lots of them; personal ones, too.” It was moments like this that reminded Suga of how little social connection Kageyama had. While he had been a prodigy in his class, and was known for his exquisite work, he wasn’t very popular among his classmates. Kageyama never showed interest in meeting up with old acquaintances, and would avoid going near his old school. Kageyama never spoke of his time in school, but Oikawa’s snooping skills had dug up the information. It had saddened Suga to hear of how distant Kageyama had been from his fellow bakers, but the wedding planner was happy they had stumbled into each other years ago. If they hadn’t, Suga worried that the introverted baker would be quite lonely.

“You know, Hinata may just be trying to get to know you.”

“Why?”

“Maybe he finds you interesting?” The lack of time it took for Kageyama’s face to shift from white to red was impressive, black hair fluttering when the baker shook his head.
“That can’t be it.”

“Oh, my sweet Tobio-kun.” The purr in Oikawa’s voice made both men jump, Kageyama’s shoulder remaining stiff when a warm arm wrapped around it. The brunet yanked Kageyama into his side, waving his free hand through the air as he spoke. “You’re so pure, so naive to Hinata’s obvious infatuation with you.”

“That’s impossible; Hinata told me he was straight,” Kageyama reasoned, Oikawa making sure both men saw his eyeroll.

“It’s pretty sad when two gay men can’t pick out a Code Strawberry while me, the bi, can.” The confused look on Kageyama’s face was all the older man needed to scoff. “It’s when a gay man is pretending to be straight in the wedding party. Seriously, read the pamphlet.”

“Where’s your proof that Shouyou is gay?” Suga asked, Oikawa humming before he pressed a finger into Kageyama’s cheek.

“That big lava cake explosion? Chibi-kun was panicking because I caught him staring at Tobio-kun.”

“M-Me?” Kageyama’s words were mushed from the finger still digging into his face, though his eyes were lined with innocent curiosity as he glanced up at Oikawa.

“Of course it was you. You’re quite the cutie, even with your puppy dog scowl.” The smug assistant gave a slow nod, Suga becoming suspicious of his assistant.

“Tooru,” He warned quietly, though Oikawa brushed off his unspoken threat. Instead he smiled at Kageyama, then leaned down to deliver his next sentence into the baker’s ear.

“He definitely wanted something in his mouth, but it wasn’t your cake.”

“Wha-oh. Oh...I have...have to--cake, I--m-may I be excused?” Kageyama’s mouth fumbled to form a sentence, though the strained tone in his voice proved how damaging Oikawa’s words were to the younger man. Suga showed sympathy with a quiet nod, waiting until the shaken baker had rushed out of the room to fixate his eyes on Oikawa’s ‘innocent’ face.
“Was it something I said?”

“Why do you have to tease him like that? You know how sensitive he is,” Suga said, the assistant shrugging as he moved to sit on the edge of Suga’s desk.

“He’s got to loosen up a little if he wants any chance with chibi-kun. Once that kid admits he’s into men, he’s going to jump Tobio-kun. And though he may know his way with a whisk, he doesn’t know a think about handling a man’s-”

“Please tell me there’s a reason you’ve come to my office besides bad kitchen puns.” Suga’s plea was met with a nod from Tooru, the pretty assistant glancing down at his swinging feet.

“Oh, right. Your loverboy’s here to visit with his two friends.” It took a second for Suga to realize what Oikawa was implying.

“Are you talking about my meeting with Asahi and Noya?”

“Yup,” Oikawa answered happily, Suga nearly knocking the man off his desk when he scrambled to grab his folder.

“Tooru, you should have said that in the first place!”

“I got distracted by the crisis at hand! Code Strawberry is a serious epidemic-”

“I don’t have time for this; sometimes you are the worst assistant ever.”

“I put them up on the balcony!” Oikawa’s sing-song tone was barely caught by Suga as he scammed out of the office, promising to get a new assistant with every step he took. He slowed his pace when reaching the balcony, calming his breathing and fixing his hair before he pulled the doors open.

“Sorry about that, I-”
“Sorry for what?” Noya’s questioning gaze stopped Suga mid-apology, the fair haired man realizing why his groom was so confused. The table he had been positive would be bare was covered with a cream colored table cloth and decorated with a tea set. In front of the three men sitting at the table were packets that Suga recognized were the outline of the meeting, as well as an extra chair for Suga to sit at. Oikawa had set up before retrieving his boss, probably noticing Suga had been held up by Kageyama’s impromptu meeting.

So maybe Oikawa was worth the money Suga paid him.

“I guess I should be saying something along the lines of ‘good evening’ instead,” Suga answered, hoping his charming smile would overshadow his entrance. Noya seemed more than willing to forgive the wedding planner, jumping out of his seat to give the taller man a hug. Though surprised by the movement, Suga kept his balance and gave a hug in return, peeking over Noya’s head at his bashful fiancee.

“Yuu’s taken a liking to you, and he tends to show his affection for people through physical action,” Asahi explained, Suga humming in understanding while he pet the top of Noya’s head.

“We have a few like this on our side, too.” Oikawa was the master of physical interaction, though Kuroo also tended to enjoy a well deserved hug or cuddle. Even Yamaguchi tended to enjoy physical praise, though Kageyama and Kenma (Kuroo excluded) shied away from any such interaction.

“You give mom hugs,” Noya proclaimed, peeping up at Suga who shrugged at the offhanded comment.

“My mom was a big fan of hugs,” he answered, noticing Noya’s grip tightened.

“Mine is too. Well, she used to be...” There was a smallness to the man’s voice that Suga wasn’t used to. From each interaction he had with the mechanic, personality boomed from his voice. But here, in this moment of displaced vulnerability, Suga hear a side of Noya he hadn’t before. Quick to respond, Suga pressed his cheek onto Noya’s head, letting his words weave between fluffy hair.

“I like your hugs too, Noya.” They stayed like that for a few seconds before Noya released and returned to his spot next to Asahi. Instantly the taller man was holding his fiancee’s hand, supporting him without words. Suga moved toward his own spot, surprised when Daichi rose to pull the seat out for him. It was a simple gesture that could be a sign of respect, yet Suga felt his
“I like to think it’s still out there,” Daichi replied, helping Suga push his seat in before returning to his own. The wedding planner tried to focus his eyes back to the file in front of him, though his couldn’t help the casual glance Daichi’s way when the man fixed his collar. The black button up looked good on the tan skin, while the color always emphasized how pale Suga was. He tore his gaze back to the outline of the meeting, then turned his attention to Asahi and Noya.

“Thank you guys for coming on such short notice. We’d like to get your wedding preparations started as soon as possible, especially the invitations. My team will do everything in their power to take on the brunt of the work, but we may reach out to you for some missing details or questions.”

“We’re happy to help,” Asahi assured, Daichi nodding once in agreement.

“I know that Tanaka’s taken a lot of the responsibility of the shop on, so I’ll be taking charge of most of the best man obligations.”

“Tanaka’s called planning the bachelor party.” Noya’s grin showed that they had already started talking about the event, though it was several months in the future. It didn’t seem like Suga was surprised by the statement, the wedding planner giving a quick nod in understanding.

“Well today’s meeting is more focused on the specifics of what you’d like to do at your wedding. For example, we’ll need to have a guest list in order to send out the invitations. Have you been able to think about the size of your guest list?”

“We’ve estimated about one hundred and ten people coming to the wedding,” Asahi said, Suga jotting down the information in the file.

“That’s a good size for a wedding. If you could get us their addresses and names, Oikawa and I will be starting the invitation process on Tuesday. Are you two still satisfied with the colors and design you picked out at our last meeting?"

“Yup! Orange is going to pair up really nicely for our summer wedding.” Noya and Asahi’s color choices weren’t unheard of; orange was a bright color that paired well with black tuxes and softer colors of summer. It was vibrant and full of life, which matched Noya’s colorful personality. But it was also a strong statement color, which mirrored Asahi as well. It felt right for the couple, and Suga supported the decision completely. Knowing that sometimes orange could be overwhelming,
the wedding planner suggested a simple invitation with splashes of orange watercolors along the bottom of the cream paper. The black envelope lettered with brighter orange ink was classy with a touch of fun that didn’t take away from the big event.

“Great. There are a few other things we need to discuss. Music, food, flower arrangements and the engagement photos are the main priority for tonight.”

“I know that we all talked about music, and a DJ makes the most sense.” Daichi provided the answer for Suga, the cop taking a sip from his drink before continuing. “They’ve got different tastes in music, so a DJ would be able to meet both of their needs.”

“We were hoping you had some suggestions,” Asahi continued, Suga giving his signature smile.

“Of course; we have a team that does some of our events. I’ll email them after this meeting and see if they’re available for the day of the wedding. Now, for the choices in food—”

“Could we do chinese?” Noya’s question was a bit of a surprise for Suga, the smaller man shrugging as he glanced to Asahi. “We’ve always had a thing for chinese food, and we’re not huge fans of classy meals.”

“I’ll look into it, but I don’t see why not. I know of a few places who do buffets, I can contact them about the proposition.”

“If you can’t do it, we can always find something simpler,” Asahi mumbled, his hand consistently pushing a loose strand of hair behind his ear from nerves. Hoping to ease his groom, Suga wrote down the information while speaking.

“Don’t worry about us; we’re here to make your special day as perfect as possible. Let’s move onto the flowers for the wedding. Yamaguchi has an opening for next Thursday to help decide how much and what style of floral design you’d like for your wedding. Does that work for you?” When both men nodded at the question, Suga checked off the tentative date before flipping the paper he was working with. “Then the final piece we need to focus on today is the engagement photo. You both are still comfortable with Kuroo taking the picture?”

“Yes, Yuu and I feel he’ll do the best work for us.”
“He is quite the photographer,” Suga agreed, his pride swelling for his little crow. “Then the only thing that really needs to be discussed is the location of the pictures.”

“Oh, right! There’s a spot on the venue I wanted to look at.” Suddenly Noya was up, his hand tight in Asahi’s as he led his fiancee toward the doors. “I’m gonna show him where I was thinking for the picture to see if he likes it too.”

“Do you want me to go with you?”

“Nah, just keep Daichi company and we’ll be right back. Play nice you two.” The wink Noya gave the wedding planner was anything but innocent before he dashed from the patio with Asahi.

“Is it okay for them to be walking around without supervision?” Daichi’s comment sounded more like a chaperone than a best man, and Suga felt himself smile as he shrugged.

“We let couples walk around on their own sometimes so they can discuss a decision without prying ears. I’m sure they’ll be okay.”

“If they’re not back in ten minutes, I’d send a search party. Neither is known for their sense of direction and this venue is huge.”

“If you include the guest house, it’s 10 acres.”

“Better make it five minutes.”

“I’m starting to feel like you just don’t want to be left alone with me,” Suga teased, his eyes shifting to the laughing man beside him.

“That’s not my intention, I promise.”

“Good, because you’re stuck with me for the next three months.” Suga leaned forward, resting his head in his hands while his elbows pressed into the table. The movement brought the two closer, and Daichi’s cheeks pinkened despite the smile he wore.
“I’m okay with that.” The soft answer wasn’t what Suga expected, and the wedding planner blinked as his face exposed his surprise. Daichi scratched his cheek with a laugh, his eyes looking away too fast to notice the blush tinting Suga’s cheeks. “Is that weird?”

“No, of course not! I meant what I said on the phone about looking forward to working with you.”

“So then I guess I should say that you can text me whenever you need to talk.” Finally the police officer returned his gaze to Suga, seeming to emphasize his point with his glance. “And it doesn’t just have to be about the wedding.”

“I’d...really like that.” The honesty in the conversation had distracted them from the disappearing space between them, and Suga noticed how Daichi’s eyes flickered lower than his eyes. A tingly feeling spread through the wedding planner’s lips, and Suga’s instinct was to cover his mouth. His professionalism scolded him for enjoying the feeling, yet Suga didn’t hesitate to take his own glance at the officer’s features. From his kind eyes, to his smooth skin and soft looking mouth, Suga couldn’t deny how good-looking Daichi was. It was an appeal that came from more than just physical attributes; pairing Daichi’s calm demeanor and understanding personality to his looks enhanced the warmth flowing through Suga’s stomach. Suga was attracted to Daichi, and he had suspicion the feeling was mutual.

“We picked our spot!” Like a rubber band the two snapped away from each other. The wedding planner was quick to toss his perfected smile at the couple, Noya seeming quite pleased with his announcement. “The gazebo where we want to say our vows would look really good with the sunset behind it! Could they take the picture then?”

“Of course; I’ll let Kuroo and Kenma know about your preference. They said they’d be free Monday, does that work for you?” After both men nodded, Suga slipped out of his seat in order to walk toward the door of the balcony. “Perfect. That’s all the information I’ll need for now, so let me walk you out.”

“This is all so exciting,” Noya gushed, keeping in pace with Suga while the wedding planner walked the group to the front door. “You’re probably used to this, but it’s all really new to me. I can’t really grasp that I’m getting married, you know?”

“Even though I’ve worked with brides and grooms for years, I’ve never lost the feeling of joy that comes with each new wedding,” Suga confessed, Noya’s eyes glimmering up at him when reaching the steps to the front of the house. With little warning Noya hugged the taller man again, burying his face into Suga’s chest.
“You really are the best! We’re going to have the best wedding because of you.” The muffled words made Suga’s heart swell, the fair haired man savoring the sweet tone of his new client. Some people married because of obligation or social pressure. Though their weddings could have all the money in the world poured into them, it never compared to someone who was marrying for the simple fact that they loved their partner. Noya fit into that rare category, and Suga wanted to provide him with the dream wedding he was envisioning. He stepped away from Noya when the hug was done, shaking hands with Asahi while giving the tall man a confident smile.

“I’ll do my best to make you and Noya’s day special.”

“Thank you,” Asahi answered politely, stepping away to let Suga’s attention flicker to the final man in the group.

“Will I be seeing you at the photo shoot Monday?” Suga asked, extending his hand between them.

“If my schedule allows it, then I’ll be there,” Daichi replied, sliding his strong grip around Suga’s hand.

“Then I guess I’ll be sure to text you before that.” Suga’s impish smile paired with the slight squeeze on Daichi’s hand, the cop nodding.

“I’ll make sure to read it.” The handshake had stopped, though neither man seemed willing to let go of the other’s hand. Hazel met brown in a stare that didn’t feel out of place, as if the two had known each other for years instead of days. The magnetic attraction between them seemed to grow with each interaction, though Suga couldn’t say he minded. What was it about Daichi that tempted Suga to re-think claiming their relationship was simply professional?

“Daichi, that was really lame.” Noya’s blunt statement drew both men’s attention to the groom waiting at the bottom of the stairs, his arms crossed and his brow raised. “I mean if you’re going to hit on someone like Suga, you’re going to have to bring better lines than that.”

“Excuse me, I think it’s past Nishinoya’s bedtime.” Daichi’s voice showed no mercy as he pulled from Suga’s grasp, stomping down the stairs to snag the back of Noya’s collar. The smaller man waved to Suga while Daichi dragged him toward Asahi’s car, the wedding planner shaking his head. His shoulder bumped into the doorway as he watched the cop stuff Noya into the front seat, slamming the door loudly before peeking his head back at the venue. Suga gave a soft wave to him, Daichi hesitantly mirroring the gesture before he slipped into the backseat. Even as the car
drove away, Suga remained in the doorway, his eyes trained on the disappearing vehicle.

“Suga-san! I think Oikawa snuck into the kitchen again.” Yamaguchi’s call of his name finally pulled his attention away from the departing group, his attention focusing on the clattering of pans coming from the basement.

Thoughts about attractive cops and natural chemistry would have to wait until Monday. For now, Suga had a business to run and an assistant to strangle.

Chapter End Notes

Daichi, you poor soul. Well, at least Suga finds him cute. I hope to hear from everyone what you thought of the chapter, and make sure to give me extra love cause tomorrow’s my birthday! =)

So, what will happen at the photo shoot? At the flower session? With the blossoming relationships in our lovely wedding party? Give me Kudos and comments to find out!

Next Chapter- Pretty as a Picture
Pretty as a Picture

Chapter Summary

Sometimes the uniform really did make the man

Chapter Notes

Ahhh thank you everyone for the sweet words of encouragement! I love all of you guys for the happy birthday wishes and for commenting on the story. I just went to a wedding last week and I must say it deff inspired me to write some fun stuff this week, so enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“What a perfect night for a wedding.” Kuroo’s content sigh filled the lukewarm air, his eyes fixated on the orange sunset illuminating the water across the way. The angle he shifted the camera caught the glimmer from the water perfectly, and he couldn’t resist snapping a few still frames for his collection. Though he was dedicated to his job at “Little Crows”, it didn’t mean his eye for nature disappeared. He hadn’t won those awards by luck or chance. It was because he always saw the natural beauty others passed by.

“It’s too cold.” The soft voice of his introverted partner made his smile grow, Kuroo spinning on his heel to face the smaller man. Kenma was crouched on the ground, his golden stare fixated on the glowing phone screen in his hand. As if feeling the photographer’s eyes on him, Kenma peeked up through strands of blond. “And you’re just shooting engagement photos.”

“But to our customers, this is the start of their special day. Why do you think so many brides cry after picking their wedding dress? That’s a piece of this wonderful puzzle that we help glue together. And photos, kitten, are the best way to capture the things that matter.”

“You sound like Sugawara.” At Kenma’s reply Kuroo shrugged, dark eyes turning to tilt the camera’s scope to the gazebo.

“Better than Oikawa, right?” The response was silence, though Kuroo was sure the digital editor heard him.

Kenma was not one to engage in long conversations. It never bothered Kuroo, who hummed a tune
while he worked. Kenma was just shy; that didn’t mean he was boring. He watched movies with the photographer several nights a week, and he could get a point across with little conversation. And on the occasion where the quiet man was forced to engage with others, he was very intuitive. The lack of social skills showed none of Kenma’s good qualities. Shifting the tripod in the grass, Kuroo noticed that the quiet stare from his friend had not left him.

“You want me to take a selfie for you?” Kuroo’s lazy smirk received a soft shrug, the lack of indifference natural to Kenma.

“How do you plan to position them?”

“Whatever they want, though I have my own ideas.” The black-haired man grinned as he hopped onto the first step of the gazebo, his fingertips glossing over the banister. “The real problem comes with their height differences. Noya’s pretty short, and beardy’s got some height on him.”

“You’re taller than him,” Kenma supplied, Kuroo blinking before he jumped to the next step.

“You compared?”

“Sugawara takes extensive notes on the wedding party for the tuxedos and dresses, though Oikawa likes doing measurements by hand too much to look at them. I type up the notes.” Kenma’s explanation seemed acceptable to the photographer, the top step squeaking when Kuroo dropped down to sit on it.

“Well what about the other groom?”

“159cm.”

“That’s not much shorter than a certain blond I know.” Kenma’s eyes rolled to show he didn’t appreciate the reminder, Kuroo’s smile showing pure amusement. “The two of us aren’t far off from them.”

“I’m not that short.” Kuroo waved the comment away before he curled his finger, catching Kenma’s bored stare.
“Come here.”

“I’m comfortable.” Yet he still paused his game, the editor sighing to vocalize his disinterest in whatever Kuroo was planning. The second his foot met the first step, Kuroo’s hand was around his wrist, pulling his unsuspecting victim forward. Kenma’s lower back smacked into the edge of the raised stair, the pain sparking out when a warm chest pressed into his shoulderblades. He was facing the path leading to the gazebo, unable to see the photographer behind him. Long legs were bent on either side of him, while sturdy arms wrapped over his shoulders like a shawl. The cold that had nipped at his fingers earlier was chased away by Kuroo’s hands, which weaved between Kenma’s and squeezed.

“How about this?” Kenma ear was presented with the disarming voice of Kuroo, the deep timbre sending shivers down Kenma’s collarbone. Kenma closed his eyes at the question, tension non-existent. He leaned back into the touch, his signature shrug re-appearing.

“You’re heavy,” Kenma complained, rolling his head to lay it back on Kuroo’s shoulder.

“Are you calling me fat?” Kuroo’s tone held disbelief, Kenma sighing in irritation.

“I’m saying this position would look overbearing for Asahi and Noya. Asahi is built stockier than you, and Noya will look even smaller than me because of his lean structure. The picture may look intimidating for their body types.”

“See, this is why I keep you around.” The humorous words were spoke against the back of his neck, Kenma unsure why his cheeks warmed at the contact from his friend. “So what do you think we look like?”

“Not sure.” The editor felt twin squeezes against his palms, forgetting his friend still held them.

“If I had to guess, I bet we could pass as lovers.” Now sure he was blushing at Kuroo’s teasing, Kenma opened his eyes and squirmed in the embrace.

“Switch.”

“Eh?”
“The positions needs to be switched.” Kenma pushed onto his feet by digging his elbows into Kuroo’s thighs, ignoring the complaining groan from his friend. A small shake of his wrists released his hands, Kenma moving up the steps to kneel behind Kuroo. The shift of height allowed Kenma to slip his arms over Kuroo’s shoulders, the small chest easily cushioned by Kuroo’s back. His head slotted next to Kuroo’s, and like magnets their hands found each other again. “This position balances their height differences and represents their relationship more accurately.”

“How so?”

“They’re a team.” Kenma’s thumb brushed along Kuroo’s, his eyes lowering along with his voice. “Asahi grounds Noya; he’s able to be patient and steady, which humbles Noya. In contrast, Noya lets Asahi fly for his dreams. He encourages him to go to his highest potential, being ready to support him when he gets insecure. Together, the two are ready to take on the world.”

“That’s so true!” The editor flinched at the loudness of the newcomer’s voice, shaggy hair momentarily blocking his sight. His hands were still held captive, making Kenma lift his head to see the three men watching them. Suga and Noya were wearing matching smiles, while Asahi’s look bordered on embarrassment. His shorter fiancee ran toward the gazebo, his step closer to a hop than a walk. “How did you know so much about me and Asahi?”

“That’s, um…” Having such an eager look focused on him made Kenma’s insecurity rise, losing confidence in his speech.

“Kenma’s a very intuitive member of our team, and tends to understand the flow of the couple with little observation.” Suga’s explanation gave him more credit than he deserved but before he could object, a warm sensation was pressed against his temple.

“I told you; he’s the brain of our team.” Kenma turned to look at Kuroo in shock, though it had nothing to do with his words. The photographer was always complimenting him. What had thrown his normally composed demeanor out the window was the action before the words. Had Kuroo kissed him? The taller man’s composer gave no indication that the motion bothered him, keeping a casual conversation with the energetic groom going. He hadn’t moved out of Kenma’s hold, Kuroo’s fingers still tangled between his own.

“Kenma? Is everything okay?” Suga’s voice of concern drew the editor’s attention, who blinked slowly before nodding.
“...Fine.” The look Kenma gave worried Suga more than he wanted to admit. His quiet friend was known for keeping his thoughts and emotions to himself. But here, as Kuroo pushed off the step of the gazebo to shake hands with the couple of the hour, Kenma’s face showed an array of emotions. While the pinkening of his cheeks implied embarrassment, the strange glint in the unfocused gaze told a deeper story. The silent editor didn’t let his eyes stray from the back of Suga’s photographer, and the wheels could be seen turning in Kenma’s head. But a second later the look was gone, the editor muttered something about the dark room as he walked away from the group. Before Suga could question it further, a low wolf whistle echoed through the air.

“Well well well, who invited the stripper?”

Suga wanted to scold Kuroo for his inappropriate comment, but his mind derailed when hazel eyes caught why the photographer made the comment. Dressed in a black police uniform, the man now walking toward the group was an eye catcher. A familiar pair of dark eyes were apologetic as Daichi waved toward the group, yet Suga couldn’t keep his gaze on the officer’s face for long. The snug fabric around the newcomer’s thighs was distracting at best, the wedding planner clutching the clipboard tightly to his chest in fear of losing control of his limbs. He had already relinquished his rights to his eyes, which traveled along the tan arms riddled with sinewy muscle. Had Daichi always looked so...commanding? Or did the clothes really make the man?

“And it’s not even my birthday.” Kuroo’s sly comment finally snapped Suga from his stupor, Daichi not seeming to notice the staring as he rolled his eyes at the cocky photographer.

“Shut up, Kuroo.”

“Why don’t you make me, officer?” The sexual connotation dripping from Kuroo’s tone made the cop flush under his glare, turning his attention from the tall man to glance at his two friends. Noya seemed to be waiting for the look, his hands planted firmly on his hips.

“You’re late!”

“Sorry. I got held up with paperwork,” Daichi explained, though the frown on Noya’s face seemed unforgiving.

“Yuu, you know it’s not his fault,” Asahi defended, giving a gentle pat on his displeased fiancee’s shoulder. “He doesn’t get to choose his own schedule like us.”
“Don’t be mad; he’s pretty eye candy for some of us.” Kuroo’s teasing tone got a glare from Daichi, though seemed to lighten Noya’s mood when he snickered. Seeing the light flicker back into his subject’s face, Kuroo seized the opportunity. “Now that our sexual fantasies have been fulfilled for the next three years, shall we get this show on the road? We’ve only got so much sunset left, and the orange will pair fantastic with your theme.”

“I want to do the pose Kenma was talking about!” Like a monkey, Noya hopped onto his lover’s back, the tall man seeming quite used to the random movement. With little effort he snagged the back of Noya’s thighs, carrying his other half toward the gazebo. Happy to have the attention diverted, Daichi’s eyes flickered to the one man who he hadn’t spoken to since he arrived. The wedding planner in question had his eyes focused on something on his clipboard, and for a moment Daichi hesitated to approach him. Would he be interrupting something? But as soon as the thought sparked, Suga popped his head up, a smile instant when catching Daichi’s gaze.

“Good evening, Daichi.” The cop shifted the few steps to move beside the light haired man, his hands finding solace burying in the pockets of his pants.

“Same to you. I hope your day hasn’t been hectic.” A pretty brow was raised at the statement, Suga weaving his pen between his fingers while he tilted his head toward Daichi.

“I take it yours has?”

“Two old ladies got into a fist fight in the middle of the street over the last head of lettuce at a grocery store.” Daichi’s blunt statement sent Suga into a fit of laughter, which seemed to instantly release the tension that had been building in the taller man’s back. All day it had been bothering him, yet a simple giggle from the wedding planner worked miracles to his stressed body.

“I hope it was iceberg at least; romaine’s not worth the battle.” The humor in Suga’s tone made Daichi grin even as he rolled his eyes.

“Sorry, I was too busy dodging eggs from an irate grandma to inspect the value of the lettuce.”

“No!” Suga gasped, though Daichi was sure it was his desperate attempt to keep from bursting into another round of laughter.

“Yup. Though I guess I can’t complain, since Iwaizumi got it worse.”
“Do I want to know?”

“Whoever said ‘don’t cry over spilled milk’ never got it poured down their pants.” The fact that Iwaizumi kept a straight face during the altercation was more than commendable to Daichi, though some of the colorful language he had used after the event wasn’t so composed. The whole incident had happened at the end of their shift, which had been the reason the cop had been so late to the appointment. Sighing, Daichi glanced down at his uniform and scowled. “I didn’t even have time to change.”

“I can see that,” Suga breathed out, making the cop lift his head in confusion. The wedding planner toyed with the pen slipped in the clasp of the clipboard, his smile trying to show innocence he couldn’t quite commit to. “You look different in your uniform, Daichi.”

“Older, right? I get that a lot,” Daichi filled in, scowling as he yanked at the collar of his police attire. Suga was quick to shake his head, knowing it wasn’t necessary to rest his palm on the warm skin of Daichi’s bicep.

“It’s not a bad thing,” Suga supplied, the two making short eye contact. The moment of clarity was evident in the officer’s face, and Suga decided that pink was a good color for his new friend when he blushed.

“Yeah?”

“Yup! You look handsome.” A strong hand rubbed along the dark hair that dusted Daichi’s nape, the cop casting his gaze back onto their friends.

“I make do, I guess.” The dismissive way Daichi dealt with compliments reminded Suga of a shy baker he knew, Suga’s lips twitching into a smile. It wasn’t surprising that the mature man didn’t revel in praise like Oikawa or Kuroo; he seemed to air on the side of humility and modesty. It was just another charming quirk to Suga, who knew not to press the subject further. Instead, he turned the conversation to safer waters, hoping to keep their relationship respectful.

“Noya told me that Tsukishima agreed to come for the flower viewing. I’d be lying if I said I wasn’t surprised when I heard the news.”

“You’re not alone on that front; I’m still trying to figure out what happened between them during the walkthrough.”
“It couldn’t have been bad if Yamaguchi is asking for him to return. They could be striking up a new friendship, like Shouyou and Kenma.” Despite Suga’s optimistic view on the situation, Daichi couldn’t find solace in the suggestion. Tsukishima wasn’t known for bothering himself with something that didn’t further his personal or professional gain. Whatever had transpired between the two men last week, it wasn’t filled with good intention.

“Let’s just keep an eye on them, to be safe.” Daichi’s serious tone made Suga blink before he laughed, curling his fingers in front of his smile and closing his eyes.

“You really care about your friends, huh?”

“It’s just cause they can’t be trusted to take care of themselves,” Daichi answered quickly, though a mirthful look from Suga showed he could hear the lack of conviction in the cop’s voice.

“They must really rely on you.”

“I wouldn’t say-” Before Daichi could protest, a call of his name brought both men’s attention to the gazebo. Noya was bright eyed and intent on meeting Daichi’s gaze, his arms secure in their hold around Asahi’s shoulders. “What’s wrong, Noya?”

“Should Asahi keep his hair up for the picture? We can’t decide which we like better.”

“Up.” The command under his tone was automatic, and Daichi backed his response with explanation. “If it’s down it’ll get in your face. Plus, the only manly part about Asahi is his man bun.”

“Daichi, don’t be mean.” Asahi turned his head to bury it into Noya’s shoulder, the mechanic snickering as he pet his fiancee’s head.

“I’ll stop when you don’t expect a man half your size to fight your battles,” Daichi quipped back, Noya’s head popping up in immediate outrage.

“Not half!” By now Suga had fallen into another set of laughter, leaning his shoulder against the arm of the man next to him. Daichi’s gaze flickered over at the contact, his eyes softening at the
light sparkling in the wedding planner’s eyes.

“You’re like their father.”

“Says the doting mother of ‘Little Crows’.” Kuroo put in his two cents while snapping another picture of the cuddling couple, and Suga gave a shrug that showed he couldn’t argue the truth. Instead he glanced up to Daichi, a hopeless smile clenching the cop’s heart unexpectedly.

“Then I guess we make a good pair, huh?”

“I have a feeling you do well with most.” Before Suga could reply, Daichi nudged his own shoulder into their contact, the previous smile dimming to one of sincerity. “But I don’t think I like you working with someone else this close.”

The way Suga’s face lit up at the statement clearly showed the wedding planner’s embarrassment, yet Daichi couldn’t amend the statement. He knew Suga worked with many, and he wasn’t special in appearance or personality. He was by no means ugly, but his looks weren’t the stuff that stopped traffic. Suga probably could. The cute beauty mark on his cheek and his sincere smile paired perfectly with his fair skin and soft hair. The aura he exuded was pure, unlike any other person he’d ever encountered before. And now, with his cheeks lit with abashed warmth, his attractiveness doubled.

The shy look on Suga’s face contradicted the brush of fingers against his own, Daichi’s eyes widening at the surprise touch.

“Me either.” If anyone gave them a second look, they would have noticed Suga’s pinky casually entwined around Daichi’s. Neither man spoke of the contact, silently watching Kuroo arrange Noya and Asahi into another snapshot.

But both smiles proved how comforting the connection was.

~**~

Yamaguchi was a total wreck. If the sweaty palms and trembling fingers didn’t give it away, the fact that he couldn’t wrap a single bow around his current set of bouquets was proof enough. He felt horrible for not being able to give his undivided attention to the daisies he was primping. The
bride who ordered the flowers spoke of how the contrast of blue ribbon was perfect for her vision. Her cheerful face had sparkled at the model bouquet Yamaguchi had presented her. Now with her wedding only a few days away, the florist felt guilt for messing up another bow.

It would be the first time since the walk-through that he’d be seeing Tsukishima Kei. The lawyer hadn’t hesitated to agree in coming to Noya and Asahi’s appointment, but Yamaguchi wasn’t sure how to take that information. The freckled florist wasn’t blind; the lawyer was gorgeous. He had a tall and lean build, and it was obvious that he took good care of his body. Maybe it was that very reason that Yamaguchi was in the difficult predicament he was. Tsukishima’s alluring eyes and teasing voice had distracted him from the severity of the bet. Yamaguchi had put his job on the line. And for him, it was as good as his life.

Some thought he had been born to love flowers. Being raised in the apartment above a flower shop his parents ran was a life shaper. While some kids were playing baseball or jumping bike ramps, Yamaguchi was learning the difference between a marigold and magnolia. Most boys would have hated working with his mother on valentine’s day arrangement, yet Yamaguchi couldn’t think of a place he’d rather be. He had a skill for the trade, and he eagerly volunteered to work for his father once being old enough to. When high school was over, Yamaguchi had the grades to go to many highly recommended colleges. The quiet teen had turned down the idea, instead deciding to continue working with his passion. The hard work and dedication paid off; after working with Suga’s business for a few years, Suga offered Yamaguchi a full time position. It was the proudest moment of his life.

And all of it could be ruined by Tsukishima.

“Hello?” Yamaguchi squeaked at the new voice, dropping the spool of ribbon in his hands. He whipped around to face the front of the workspace, trying to force a smile onto his shaky lips.

“Go-Good afternoon!” Why did he have such bad control over his nerves? The florist mentally chastised himself, but kept his smile big as Asahi gave a gentle wave.

“Ah, you as well. I hope you don’t mind we came a little early.” At Asahi’s smile Yamaguchi quickly nodded, hoping to seem welcoming to the pair.

“It’s no problem at all.” Though he wanted to keep his attention focused on the couple (as this was their wedding), Yamaguchi’s eyes fixated on the doorway when another man appeared. His heart stalled at the familiar glint of glasses entering his vision. The lawyer looked just as professional as he had the first time, a phone glued to his ear and his face fixated in a scowl.
“I’m not interested in your sorry excuse of an offer; your client fractured my client’s jaw in 2012, broke her arm in two places in 2014, and was given a restraining order in 2015. The judge will not side with you for custody, no matter if he has a higher pay bracket than Miss Amarah. I’ve also faxed over the new date for court; it’ll be with Judge Marcus. His trend of siding with abuse victims is 74%. Take that into consideration before you try to threaten me with another stipulation.”

The strength that echoed in the blonde’s voice was breathtaking to the florist. Though the sharpness of his tongue was nothing new, the articulation and the steady beat between words gave no room for argument. It was obvious that Tsukishima was quite good at his job. His eyes weren’t focused on anything in particular, yet they held an authority that was clearly in control. The florist’s hands were balled in the bottom of his dirt smudged shirt, resisting the urge to grasp at his own heart. How could someone instill both fear and awe in a matter of seconds? Though Yamaguchi was sure those eyes could cut diamonds with their cold exterior, the florist also wanted to stare at them for as long as he could.

Yet when they flickered toward the brown stare, a shiver itched up the florist’s spine.

“I’ll see you in court.” The phone was hung up and slipped into the lawyer’s pocket, Tsukishima coughing once before he thinned his lips into a displeased scowl. “I apologize for that.”

“O-Oh…it’s okay!” Had he just said sorry? Though he didn’t think the man was always rude, it was strange to hear such manners directed toward him. As if reading his mind, Noya snickered, moving to slap his hand onto Tsukishima’s back.

“This guy acts like he’s a big shot from the city, but he ain’t that bad. You should see him around dinosaurs.” The glare that was sent toward the mechanic was vicious, yet the small man was immune. To think anyone was able to shrug off a look like that was unbelievable, especially since Asahi seemed more than affected by the stare.

“Dinosaurs can be cool,” Yamaguchi offered, hoping to ease the tense shoulders of the lawyer. He realized quite quickly how wrong his choice of words were, as Tsukishima’s reply dripped with underlying disdain.

“I thought we were here to focus on flowers?”

“Ah, right! Sorry, Tsukki.” The nerves mixed with Tsukishima’s cold stare made the nickname fly from his mouth. Three sets of eyes instantly flashed over to him, and the florist felt his whole face light up in embarrassment. Two sets were riddled with surprise, while the last one lost it’s anger for
intrigue. The golden eyebrow was raised over the rim of black glasses, as if egging Yamaguchi to continue. Which of course, the florist did. “That wasn’t my idea! Well, I mean, I did think of the name. But it was Kuroo’s idea to give you a nickname, and I-”

“Kuroo-san is an idiot.” The roll of his eyes showed his lack of appreciation for Kuroo’s decision, though it didn’t hold any negative implication toward Yamaguchi. The florist let out a relieved sigh as he leaned back against his workspace, his hands curling along the edge of the table. Asahi’s eyes followed the motion, his quiet voice a little steadier than previous meetings.

“That’s a lovely centerpiece, Yamaguchi.”

“Huh?” The brunette glanced down to his table, noticing the project he had finished earlier in the morning.

“Oh, this? It’s for a wedding coming up Saturday.”

“Could you tell me about them?” It was the first time since meeting the couple that the writer took the driver seat in the appointment. It seemed that the gentle giant had an affinity for flowers, and Yamaguchi was willing to share his passion with someone.

“Of course.” For the first time all meeting, Yamaguchi felt in his element. He moved to the centerpiece, running his fingers over the white and purple petals. “The couple has been together for fifteen years; the two were childhood sweethearts. The groom had planned their wedding since they were eleven; he had attended a wedding back when Suga-san’s parents ran the venue. The groom proposed on the day he met her. He had her entire family in on the proposal, and she was more than eager to say yes.

“With their colors being white and purple, I went with the white calla lily as the primary flower, as they represent beauty and innocence. Blended with this is purple lilacs, the symbol of first love. By peppering these blue tiffany hydrangeas in-between, it helps compliment the purple and white. It also compliments the color of the bride’s eyes. Around the glass vase, we’ve placed purple satin ribbon with a blue tinted tulle toward the center. The white crystal embroidery were glued to the tulle in a heart formation, as to match the heart engagement ring he gave her. And we’ve dyed the water purple to give the white calla lilies a purple tint for the wedding.”

“That’s really beautiful,” the writer complimented, and the florist could see the increase of blinking in his smaller groom’s eyes.
“You can feel so much love in this!” Noya gushed, Yamaguchi blushing as he nodded.

“I like to tell the love story of each couple through my flowers.”

“Have you thought of any flowers for this wedding?” Tsukishima’s quiet question gave no implication of being moved like the couple, and Yamaguchi felt a fissure of frustration grumble through his stomach as he nodded.

“But I don’t want to press my opinion onto them if they-”

“No, it’s quite alright!” Asahi interjected, quick to bow toward the smaller man. “We’d love to hear what you have in mind.”

“Ah, well then…” Yamaguchi moved behind the table, his hands grasping a sketchbook. Flipping a few pages of filled drawings, the florist stopping on a specific design. Flustered by his lack of drawing expertise, Yamaguchi quietly moved to present the outline to the three men. “Because your wedding is in the summer, I’d like to involve a centerpiece with a warm, outgoing feeling. The orange of the tiger lily represents passionate love, which pairs nicely in your style of intimacy, as well as your unique first meeting. It’ll tie into your theme, as well. If you’re hesitant about the design of the centerpiece, please don’t be afraid to tell me.”

“The flower’s submerged in the water?” Asahi asked, Yamaguchi nodding as he explained.

“There’s a candle that floats on the top of the water, to illuminate the flower. Because your wedding will be having a dinner instead of lunch, the candles will light the tables during the reception. If following my design, we’d place the centerpiece on top of a small black cloth, and place orange and clear stones at the bottom of the glass.”

“You’d order these?” Tsukishima asked, Yamaguchi hesitating to answer.

“No, I...I make everything by hand. The flowers would wilt in delivery, and many outsourced flowers don’t have the same vitality as home-grown or local plants,” Yamaguchi explained, nervously brushing his hair behind his ear. “I also make any flower arrangements on the gazebo, bouquets, and other requests that the couple have.”

“Can we look at the bouquets, too?” Noya asked eagerly, Yamaguchi allowing Noya to take his
“You can look through my previous sketches, and I’ve got some set up along the table to your right that I use as models for couples getting married. Please look them over; I’ll give you and Asahi time to talk about it. I’ll be outside in the garden if you have any questions, okay?” The smile he sent the two was genuine as he excused himself, moving from the workshop to give his current clients privacy. Yamaguchi took a slow breath of air, the clean breeze calming the florist. He enjoyed nothing more than being outside in his garden. The sights and smells felt so natural, the brunette never got the same satisfaction indoors.

Closing his eyes, Yamaguchi leaned against the side of the garden’s storage garage and relaxed. He could lie and say that Tsukishima’s consistent stare on him during the appointment hadn’t affected him. Every time the florist glanced toward the blonde man, his golden eyes were focused on Yamaguchi. It should have been just another person in the appointment. Yet when meeting the gaze of the quiet lawyer...it wasn’t normal. It felt like dipping his toes into a hot spring; overwhelmingly warm, but the heat was wanted. Tsukishima made Yamaguchi’s stomach clench in a way that he hadn’t experienced before. He wanted to blame it on the bet, and the anger he had first felt when meeting the cold man.

But somehow, he knew that wasn’t the truth.

“From a sale’s point of view, leaving your customers alone was not smart.” The composed tone was specific to the lawyer, and Yamaguchi tried to ignore the weird increase in his heartbeat. Slowly he opened his eyes, turning his attention to the tall blonde now eyeing the flowers in front of them.

“What do you mean?”

“People feel more pressured into spending money when the salesperson is within eyesight. The amount of money spent rises as well.” The straight facts from the blonde left a weird taste in Yamaguchi’s mouth, and he shook his head to show his disapproval.

“Ah, but I’m okay with them not making a choice right now!”

“What salesperson doesn’t want money?”

“It’s never been about the money,” Yamaguchi argued, and a prolonged silence made the florist
continue. “I like to give them time because this is a big decision in their lives. If I force them to rush into a choice, they may be unhappy. Sometimes they just like to know they have time in order to make the right decision.”

“How much time do they have until you set a deadline?”

“I don’t give one,” he answered, blinking once before he gave a half smile. “One time I ran across the venue an hour before a wedding because the bride wanted to change her main bouquet.”

“That is absolutely stupid.” The deadpan tone of Tsukishima made him laugh, sheepishly twining his fingers together in front of him.

“She couldn’t help it; the mother kept forcing her into things she didn’t like. The wedding was too big, and the gown was a completely different style than she wanted. Every detail had been dictated by her mother because her parents were paying for the wedding. The bouquet was the last thing she could change on her own. Mom had wanted roses and a huge bouquet, but all the woman wanted was daffodils. Suga gave me the green light, and I made it without charging her.”

“So not only did you stress yourself out, but you did it pro bono?” The florist hesitated to answer, making the lawyer scoff and cross his arms. “Do you know what that means?”

“Y-Yes! And yes I did.”

“You’re a terrible businessman.”

“Ahh, sorry. But...but I’m not a businessman.”

“You are. A gullible one, at that. It wouldn’t surprise me if people take advantage of you in and outside of your business.” The words were sharp, and before Yamaguchi could protest, a switch seemed to flip on for the taller man. He stepped closer to the florist, his words precise. “Who takes care of you outside of this job?”

“What?” Yamaguchi felt his shoulder blades press harder into the barn wall as the lawyer approached him, his breath running from him at the inquisitive stare.
“Who’s responsible for you? Who do you live with?”

“Nobody, I live alone.”

“Are you implying you’re not married?”

“Ma-Married?! I’ve never even...I’m single!” The words came out with no restraint, proving Tsukishima’s intimidation skills worked outside the courtroom. He wanted to crawl in on himself, but the serious look on the tall man’s face deteriorated to shock Yamaguchi wasn’t sure he meant to expose.

“How?”

“How?” Yamaguchi repeated, his eyes widening when realizing Tsukishima wasn’t teasing him. He genuinely looked confused at his statement. The fact that it wasn’t a joke, but a serious question, instantly embarrassed him. He had never been in an intimate relationship. His co-workers knew, yet other than that, the florist tended to keep that information to himself. It was uncommon for someone his age to still be a virgin. It was beyond rare for a twenty three year old to have not experienced a real relationship. It was why his cheeks felt so hot to him, and he fought the desire to wave his hand to cool himself.

“I just haven’t really met anyone.” Tsukishima nodded at the statement, but he didn’t step away from the quiet florist.

“I’d never get married. I’m not stupid.”

“Never? Even if you find the right woman?”

“You shouldn’t assume things; I’m gay.” The answer hung in the air, Yamaguchi’s curious stare unwavering from the lawyer’s face. There was little space between them, Tsukishima leaning his forearm just over Yamaguchi’s head. His other hand had steadied him on the wood of the storage unit, unintentionally caging the florist between him and the wall. The smaller man couldn’t ignore the proximity, or the way his fingers tingled by his sides with unexplained excitement. He had experience with close contact involving other men; Oikawa had no sense of personal space on most days. But despite the lack of touch between them, Yamaguchi’s skin felt hot. Brown eyes peered
up at the lawyer quietly, wondering if the tall man used this tactic to intimidate other lawyers. But with their faces close enough to distinguish the gold from the specks of amber in the lawyer’s stare, Yamaguchi doubted it.

“Me too.” His voice was soft, and immediately his teeth bit into his lower lip in self-consciousness. The movement caught Tsukishima’s attention for a second longer than Yamaguchi thought was normal, instantly flustering him. Finally the lean man pushed away, adjusting his glasses while he glanced back toward the workshop.

“I think Nishinoya and Asahi have had enough time to look over your work.” He glanced back to the florist, who remained frozen against the storage wall, before continuing. “Who knows what those two have gotten into by now.”

“You think they’d do something in the workshop?” Yamaguchi questioned, trying to force his legs to move. Tsukishima didn’t answer right away, though a flash of intensity sparked in his stare.

“If you leave two attractive men together with no supervision, they’re bound to cross a line of decency.” Something in the tone that Tsukishima used made the florist’s gut twist and his breath quiver. His face remained passive, bored even, yet Yamaguchi knew he was trying to imply something. Even as the lawyer turned back to the workshop to check in on his friends, Yamaguchi couldn’t erase the predatory gleam he had seen.

Or the fact that somewhere deep inside him, he liked it.

Chapter End Notes

Tsukki you sly dog. Yams just doesn't know what he's gotten himself into. With everyone starting to work on Asahi and Noya's wedding, what encounters will expose some hidden feelings? Why did Kuroo kiss Kenma's cheek? What did Tsukishima mean by his last statement? And which couple may have some competition in the next chapter? You've got to kudos/comment to find out! =D

Next Chapter: Phone Call Confessions
Maybe Daichi wasn't the only one who struggled with flirting.

You're all lucky I'm putting this up today cause I have 1000 things to do and I'm beyond tired. -.- But honestly, thank you everyone who has been commenting and giving me kudos, it makes me want to write so much more!

Some weddings tested the patience of the “Little Crows” crew, and this Saturday night event had been one of them. With a wedding party that made Montagues and Capulets look like best friends, it was no easy task to get them all to play nice throughout the rehearsals. Add to the fact that both sisters of the bride had wanted to sleep with the best man only added to the fire. Oikawa and Sugawara were stretched to the extreme with smiles and placating compliments, and even had dragged Kuroo into the fray to help ease the tension. Though he didn't have the same persuasive skills as the assistant, the man behind the photo could make people smile with just his natural goofiness.

But even with the extra help, Suga felt exhausted. His hazel eyes scanned over the reception party, stopping once catching the familiar pose of his assistant. Tooru was currently leaning against the pillar next to the dancefloor, charming his way with the infamous best man. Well, that explained why the groom had turned down the offers. Despite the long day, the planner’s face glowed with flirtatious desire. The energy surprised Suga. It wasn’t that the wedding planner doubted Tooru’s skill. But with how late he had stayed up the night before working on Asahi and Noya’s wedding invitations, the brunette should be snoozing somewhere.

The whole wedding team had started as one unit at the beginning of the night. There was food, wine, and music to help the group keep focused on what they needed to do. Around 2am, Kageyama and Yamaguchi fell victims to sleep. Kenma lasted longer, but by 3am, the man was curled up on the couch. It then became Kuroo’s job to move the snoozing teammates to the beds in the guest house. Kuroo didn’t return after carrying Kenma to bed, though neither man left expected him to. The invitations were all sealed by 7am, and Tooru had offered to bring the envelopes to the post office. By the time he had returned, the wedding preparations had begun. There was no way that the brunette had been able to sleep, as Suga himself had only stole an hour of Zs on one of his couches.
And yet despite being up for well over 24 hours, Oikawa shined bright with glowing personality.

“Sugawara-san?” The smooth baritone that called his name made Suga turn, smiling at the man now standing behind him. He had gotten acquainted with the groomsman in question, though not as close as the best man. From what he remembered, the blonde was a gentleman who had always been polite and well mannered. Suga bowed to the man in front of him before rising to give a well rehearsed smile.

“Ah, good evening. I hope that you’re enjoying your time here?”

“Your work is just as wonderful as we were told. You should be quite impressed with your business; I am.” The compliment made Suga’s cheeks hurt from his smile, though he tried to stay humble with his reply.

“We do our best to give perfect accommodations for our customers. Don’t hesitate to use us for your own wedding.”

“I will be sure to keep that in mind.” The man took a step closer to Suga, his sincere eyes staying on the surprised wedding planner. “Though that’s not why I came to speak with you.”

“Is something wrong?” Suga instantly worried that he had missed something, his professionalism flaring its head. In turn the man laughed, his head shake settling some of Suga’s nerves.

“Nothing like that. I was actually coming over to ask if you were free next Friday.”

“Free next...oh.” Suga’s stomach flipped when his realization kicked in, understanding the implication of the question.

“So are you? I know a good seafood place not far from here where we could get to know each other better.” This man was asking him on a date? When was the last time that had happened? Feeling his pale skin flush, Suga quietly took in the appearance of the man in front of him. There was no denying he was handsome. He was taller than Suga by a few inches, and his smile looked like it stopped traffic. His voice gave off the same kind vibe as his blue eyes. He didn’t seem the type to flaunt his looks. In truth, Suga wouldn’t have minded getting to know him better.

“I’m sorry, I’m actually seeing someone.” So why he felt no remorse for telling the man he wasn’t
available, Suga wasn’t sure. The man didn’t seem to notice the hesitation in the wedding planner’s voice, or at least didn’t question him about it. He took the rejection well, with a simple apology and laugh that would have made any other man swoon. Even as Suga listened to the man excuse himself to rejoin his friend’s wedding, the fair haired man wanted to smack himself. There would have been no harm in giving the man a chance. He hadn’t been on a date in two years. He had let his work take over his life, and the first shot he had he instantly turned down. Did he really wish to end up alone?

“So you finally fell for my charm.” The wistful voice of a certain photographer wrapped over Suga’s ear, tugging his attention from the path the man had taken. Kuroo had a winning smile on his face as he took a snapshot of the dance floor from where they stood, dropping the camera down to flick his attention toward his boss. “Man, Tooru is gonna have a cow when he finds out.”

“From how many times he’s touched his new target’s arm, I think he’ll forgive us.” As if hearing Suga, the man in question let his fingers linger on the bicep of the best man while he laughed, tilting his head in the way he knew exposed his neck perfectly. Kuroo’s soft whistle showed his appreciation of the move, nudging Suga’s side with a snicker.

“Don’t look so worried, mom. He’s a big boy.”

“You say that like you’re positive he’s an adult.” The two smiled at the joke before Kuroo sobered up, glancing the way the groomsmen had gone.

“So, you gonna tell me some excuse as to why you said no to that guy?”

“I shouldn’t be mixing business and pleasure.”

“I can’t say I blame you.” The easy tone he used made Suga wonder if he understood the secret pining he was exposing to the wedding planner. The feline eyes weren’t looking at the wedding, but toward the small table that Suga set up for his team in the corner. Kenma’s console lit up his face while a shy Yamaguchi quietly looked on over his shoulder. Suga had been sure that the two would have retired like the baker to catch up on their sleep, yet the editor seemed content bunched up on his seat.

“Kuroo…” Suga wasn’t sure what he wanted to say. The man looked at his partner with an emotion that edged closer to admiration than the photographer was willing to admit.
“But you’d break that rule for Daichi, right?” The smooth way Kuroo switched the subject should have been expected, yet Suga still felt caught off guard by the question.

“Why would you think that?”

“Because you would be stupid to let a man like that walk away when he’s obviously hot under the police collar for you.” The sentence was spoken like a fact, and Suga knew his cheeks changed color without his permission. Just hearing the officer’s name had affected him too much to be treated as just another customer. Kuroo seemed to notice that, though he kept the teasing out of his honest statement. “When I saw you two at the photo shoot, you looked like you were enjoying your time together.”

“I try to give all of our customers polite service.”

“Maybe. But Daichi makes you happy.”

“And why are you so sure about this?” Suga asked, unable to deny his statement.

“Because I know your complimentary smile. I also happen to know your real smile because you send it my way every time you see my angelic face.” Suga’s lips twitched at the cheeky look Kuroo had, the photographer never letting a serious conversation damper his mood. “And I totally saw you two playing pinky tag like a bunch of second graders.”

“Tetsuro!” Suga protested, scowling at the obnoxious laugh his co-worker cackled out.

“I’m a photographer; I’m paid to snap the little moments. Can’t capture them without noticing them first, right?”

“You’re awful,” Suga groaned, fully convinced his face would burn off in embarrassment.

“I try my best. And let me give you some friendly advice, free of charge. This may be the only chance I’m ever going to say this and actually mean it; be a little more like Oikawa.”

“Excuse me?”
“What I mean is don’t always put the job before your heart. Take a chance, let the cop sweep you off your feet. Maybe it’ll lead to nothing, but what if it does? Do you really want to think of Daichi with someone else?” Before Suga could even process the strange constriction in his chest, Kuroo glanced over to the dance floor and sighed. “Think about it; I’ve got some dancing from the bride’s grandmother to snap.”

“Ah, right! Good luck.” Suga tried not to let his internal turmoil show as he waved his cameraman off, and luckily he wasn’t left alone for long. The call of his name from the overly emotional aunt caught his attention, her third martini seeming to do her in.

For the first time all night, Suga was grateful for a drunken distraction.

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“How did you get the silverleaf staff? Those were only given to the top one hundred players in the country!” Shouyou’s loud voice in his headphones made Kenma wince, pressing his knees closer to his chest. Kuroo always questioned how he felt comfortable curled up in the position on the computer chair, though for someone who was as large as the tall man, Kenma could understand. Being short had its benefits.

“I rank 16th in the country,” Kenma answered quietly, healing the other man’s character before casting an offensive spell. His mage character was his weakest of his five accounts, but he always used it when playing with the kindergarten teacher. Shouyou was good for a novice, and he had only played for a couple months. Kenma had perfected his craft for the game, and he had years to learn the tools of the trade. But even with Hinata’s amateur skill, it was still nice to have someone he knew in person to play with.

“I’m going to hit him with my special move now!” Kenma nodded, though knew his friend couldn’t see his compliance. Instead he watched silently as Shouyou unleashed his move, the final boss letting out a wail as it disappeared from the screen. The words ‘team win’ flashed on the screen, the pieces of treasure entering his supply bag from the win. There were some things he could use to help upgrade his armor, and the rest would be left for money. “That was awesome! Look at all the stuff we got. I can upgrade my boots now! You want to do another mission?”

“Can’t, I’ve got a set of pictures I need to edit for a wedding coming up.”

“Is that the one with the alien cake? Bakayama was saying something about them.”
“Maybe,” Kenma answered quietly, his attention shifting to the ignored laptop sitting on his desk. Opening it slowly, Kenma settled his phone in one hand while the other started its work on the pictures.

“I bet it is, all the idiot could do was complain about it. On and on he went like some old geezer. And know what else he did?” Even with his attention divided, Kenma knew the chatty teacher would take on the bulk of the conversation. As Hinata divulged into everything wrong with Kageyama, the editor let his mind wander. It was weird to think that someone like Shouyou would want to be friends with him. The orange-haired teacher was bright and excited about life. He wore his heart on his sleeve, too comfortable with being in the spotlight to hide. Kenma was quiet, far too dull and introverted to catch anyone’s attention. He was okay with his shy nature. To him, being invisible felt right.

There was only one person who truly saw Kenma. Kuroo could spot the shy man in a crowd with no problem. He had been like that since they were kids. The strong personality had rubbed Kenma’s sensitive nature the wrong way at first, though Kuroo was quick to grow on him. Becoming best friends felt easy, unlike most social contact that was pressed upon him. Kuroo hadn’t pulled away when Kenma’s anxiety flared up. There were nights that the bleached blond was too weak to leave the safety of his home. Instead of cancelling their plans or deserting the friendship, Kuroo would join him under the blankets with popcorn and whatever movie he could scrounge up.

When Kenma’s problem was under control, Kuroo was the first to praise him. The photographer became hyper aware of Kenma’s condition. Social anxiety was not a sentence to isolation, and Kuroo made sure Kenma never forgot that. The first time Kenma had an anxiety attack sophomore year, Kuroo walked out of his class and sat in the nurse’s office for three hours. No words were spoken between the two, Kenma curling under the scratchy sheet provided by the nurse. Kuroo still made his presence known by lying by him, his warmth chasing Kenma’s tremors away. A week later, when Kenma went to his first therapy appointment, the photographer sat patiently in the waiting room for two hours. Without asking, he always knew when Kenma needed him.

It was this dedication that gave Kenma conflicted emotions about their friendship.

“And maybe I made a mess of the counter, but I offered to clean it-”

“Shouyou?” Kenma’s lower lip was caught by his teeth when the other side of the phone went quiet, the editor brushing his hair behind the headphones nervously. “Can I ask you something?”

“Oh, yeah! Ask me anything!” Hinata piped out, Kenma’s eyes staring at the bright screen in front
“Have you ever wanted someone to kiss you, even though you weren’t sure why?”

“Wh-Why would I ever want that stupid baker to kiss me?!” The defensive response made Kenma flinch, fighting his instant desire to hang up the phone. Kuroo and his therapist had told him several times that loud voices did not always mean he did something wrong. After his initial negative assumption, Kenma could argue with his anxiety that Shouyou seemed more embarrassed than angry.

“A hypothetical person, I mean.”

“Oh. Well then yeah. I love kissing people. It’s always good to show people you care about them.” The happy tone relaxed Kenma’s shoulders, the blonde fixing the glare in one of the pictures before speaking again.

“Does your heartbeat change when they kiss you?”

“Nah, nothing like that. I care about them, but I don’t like them like that.”

“Like...that?”

“You know...when you kiss someone you like, your heart goes all WHOOSH and then WHAM! You just want them to keep kissing you.”

“Oh.” Kenma was sure he was supposed to give a better response, but his mind was wandering again. It felt different depending on who kissed him? How? Kenma wasn’t sure how to tell the difference mainly because Kuroo had been the only person to ever kiss him. Which category did he fall into? And were temple kisses different than kissing on the mouth?

Kenma’s musing over the question was ripped from his head when he felt his headphones being pulled off his ears.

“Kitten, I’m home.” Hearing the voice of the man previously troubling his thoughts made Kenma
blink, slowly tilting his head back to look up at Kuroo. The phone now held limply in his hand nearly fell, Kuroo quick to help steady it within Kenma’s grasp. In the captured headphones Kenma could hear Shouyou calling his name, though Kuroo didn’t seem bothered by it. Instead the photographer pulled the device still clasped in their hands to his lips, his mouth slanted with a teasing smirk. “Kenma has to get off the phone now. His real best friend just brought him dinner. Bye, shorty.”

“Kuroo,” Kenma scolded with little effort, the mentioned man sending his smaller friend a bright smile.

“I also bought pie.”

“...Apple?” Kenma’s hair was pet by his older roommate before Kuroo spun the computer chair, strong arms looping under Kenma’s back and knees to lift him up. Kenma went limp at the movement, knowing it was pointless to fight. Kuroo had always had an affinity with carrying him around to wherever he deemed Kenma needed to go. Even as kids, it was Kuroo who dragged Kenma from his bed every summer morning to go fishing or ride bikes. Every time Kenma grew an inch, Kuroo grew two, meaning the man always had the upper hand. He had learned that going with the flow was much easier than resisting his strong friend.

“As if I would ever disgrace you with a different kind.” Kenma adjusted in the kitchen seat Kuroo deposited him in, eyes searching for the mentioned dessert. “Though you don’t get it until you eat dinner.”

“Hm.”

“Don’t give me sass, or I’ll send you straight to bed,” Kuroo teased, his side smile producing a weird rumble in Kenma’s chest. The motherly tone was something Kuroo had perfected through the years, though it was all with good intention. Kenma tended to forget self-care a lot more than he wanted to admit. He could lock himself in the dark room all day without realizing it. Food was an afterthought and sleep could be skipped. If he was in his zone, it was hard for Kenma to shake himself out of it. So Kuroo took the task on himself, and since Kenma was still alive, he was doing a pretty good job.

“Thank you,” Kenma said when Kuroo placed the take-out box in front of him, the editor allowing the scent of spiced meat and vegetables fill his senses. Even if they ate out too much to be considered healthy, Kuroo did his best to vary their diet. Kenma did occasionally cook. He didn’t trust Kuroo alone in the kitchen after his first (and last) attempt at cooking nearly burned the apartment down. But with how busy this time of the year became with wedding fever, it was hard to commit to making their own food. The blonde peeked up through his bangs when Kuroo plopped into his seat, barely getting his lid off his own food before stuffing the first mouthful
“How much did my replacement distract you from work?” Kenma crinkled his nose at both the comment and the way the food lodged in Kuroo’s mouth muffled his voice.

“Manners, Kuroo.” Taking a much smaller bite from his own meal, Kenma allowed the food to be properly chewed and swallowed before answering. “Shouyou is not your replacement.”

“Since you’re dodging the actual question, I’ll assume you’re going to be pulling a late night again.”

“Maybe.” Avoiding a solid answer, Kenma focused his attention on the meal. Kuroo’s hearty laugh made the weird tension from before sink lower in his stomach. The two’s conversation went quiet while they ate, though it wasn’t uncomfortable. Sometimes Kenma enjoyed the silence and Kuroo was good at knowing when he needed time to recharge. For such a laid back individual, he was far more perceptive than many gave him credit for. The final bite food had barely slipped through Kenma’s lips before Kuroo was on his feet, moving to collect the empty bin Kenma was placing his plastic fork into.

“You better hurry up and finish those pictures; we’ve got that morning shoot with the McGraws tomorrow and I’ll need your keen eyes at least half open.”

“I can finish my work in a half hour if left undisturbed.”

“Yes, yes, I get the hint. You won’t hear a peep from me.” Kenma had barely lifted his head when his world was jolted by the small pressure now against his temple. It was shorter than their previous encounter, yet Kenma was quick to realize Kuroo had kissed him again. Even as Kuroo pulled away to take their containers to the trash, Kenma could feel the warmth from the kiss seeping into his skin. His eyes were wide in surprise, his hand brushing the side of his head before he spoke.

“Why did you do that?”

“Did it bother you?” The immediate answer wasn’t what Kenma was expecting, Kuroo’s composure staying unreadable as he turned back to his roommate and arched his eyebrow.
“No,” Kenma admitted easily. Though his stomach was heavy with his confusing emotions, the thought of disliking the affection was never a choice. He knew that he never liked the physical affection that Oikawa tended to shower everyone with, but Kuroo’s touch was different.

“Then does it matter?”

“I’ve never seen you do that with the others.” Kuroo’s grin was once again unexpected, none of the man’s reactions falling in line with Kenma’s predictions.

“That’s cause you’re special to me.” The burn that started to form in Kenma’s cheeks at Kuroo’s reply was immediate. The editor yanked his legs up in order to press his forehead to his knees, letting his hair flutter over his cheeks to help hide his blush. He wasn’t used to feeling emotions as physically as he had been recently, especially when it involved Kuroo. The unknown instantly tangled with his anxiety, making it hard for him to push air through his lungs.

Yet he still couldn’t force himself to hate the feeling.

“Pie.” Kenma’s quiet word was sure to receive a roll of feline eyes from the taller man who shuffled to the counter across the kitchen. Kenma waited until the photographer’s back was facing him to snatch his phone from the table, his fingers typing a hurried message to Shouyou.

Kozume: “Whoosh” is a terrible feeling.

~**~

Sometimes, Daichi loved his job. Being an officer of the law was a career that thousands strived to accomplish, and many couldn’t complete. He helped keep the town of Karasuno safe. At times he could see the benefits of the long hours and hard workouts. He had made some good friends working on the police force. Iwaizumi and Sugar had become some of the most steady things in his life. Adding that to the good pay and attention that kept him modest, Daichi knew he loved his job.

That didn’t mean that Daichi was impervious to the hatred of Mondays.

“I don’t want to move.” His sock covered feet dragged across the floor of his apartment, the worn out man nearly losing his balance when a ball of white appeared in front of him. Ignoring the lack of energy, Sugar happily barked at Daichi’s return, patiently awaiting her owner’s normal greeting.
Despite the fatigue he was feeling, the dark haired man felt his smile grow at Sugar’s wagging tail. Patting the furry head for a few seconds, Daichi allowed the pup to follow him into the bathroom. Food and sleep were goals, eventually. But nothing was more important than getting into the shower.

Just hearing the water splash from the shower head relaxed the tension in the officer’s shoulders. Depositing his phone and wallet onto the sink, Daichi grabbed the back of his collar to yank the white t-shirt over his head. The fabric was dropped to the floor, soon joined by the matching socks. He managed to wiggle from his pants and boxers in one try, kicking the sweaty garments to join the pile. Steam was starting to collect in the bathroom, making Daichi’s clammy skin feel sticky and uncomfortable. He popped open the window to let some cooler air in, but the warming weather gave little support. The officer shuffled back over to his shower, stopping when his phone started to vibrate against the sink. Tempted to let it go to voicemail, the curious man only let it ring twice before answering the call.

“Hello?”

“Ah, no official title this time?” The laugh on the other side of the phone was sweet, and easily recognizable to the smiling cop.

“I told you that was an accident, Suga.”

“Sure, sure. Whatever makes you feel better.” The teasing tone from the wedding planner made Daichi sigh, his weight falling back to lean against the sink. The cold porcelain reminded Daichi of the little amount of clothing he was wearing. Peeking over his shoulder, Daichi could clearly see where his uniform’s sleeve covered on his paler skin. Though tan by nature, spring and summer always made him a few shades darker. Hinata always complained about the lack of pigment in his own skin, swearing that Daichi had stolen it from him. But here in the bathroom, the lighter skin was flushed in pink after realizing he was quite naked while talking with Suga.

“Not that I mind talking to you, but I’m wondering if you had a reason for calling me?”

“Oh, right!” A soft noise could be heard from the other side of the line, implying Suga had smacked his forehead. “I was just calling to confirm that everyone will be at the tuxedo measurements thursday. Oikawa is adamant that they all be done together. I’d like to give you a reason as to why, but I don’t question him much anymore.”

“You know, Ennoshita would call that ‘learned helplessness’, ” Daichi informed, a soft hum on the other line showing Suga’s lack of concern.
“I prefer saying it’s just knowing which battles are worth fighting.”

“You’re going to have to teach Iwaizumi that.”

“From how deep Oikawa has sunk his claws in, I think your partner’s a lost cause.”

“Then it’s a good thing he confirmed today he’ll be at the fitting for the tuxedo. He’ll need something to wear at the funeral.” Letting himself smile at the lame joke, Daichi tried to bring the conversation back to the topic at hand. “And since he was the last person I was waiting to hear from, Oikawa will have all of us for the fitting. I’ve already planned out transportation and meeting locations to make sure everyone shows up on time.”

“You really make my job so much easier. What do I have to do to keep you?” The officer was sure he was reading too much into the teasing tone the wedding planner used. While his brain’s logic was sound, his body twitched at the dirty suggestion that came to mind. It didn’t help that he was leaning against the sink, naked and in the perfect position for Suga to kneel down and-

“Yo-You had a few weddings this weekend, right?” Daichi hoped his stutter or the sudden topic change wasn’t noticeable.

“Ah, so you do pay attention.” Suga’s lack of questioning over the topic helped ease his mind, though it was easy to distract the pretty man with wedding talk. Ever since their encounter at the photo shoot, Suga and Daichi had managed to text daily. Sometimes a phone call would be sprinkled into the fray, though it was rare with their conflicting schedules. It was near impossible to talk on the weekends, each busy with their high-demanding jobs. Being a Monday night meant a slow night for Suga, as it was rare for a wedding to take place at the start of the work week.

“Sometimes.”

“Well, Saturday’s wedding was a hot mess. Two of the bridesmaids fought over the bouquet, and the father of the groom got drunk before his speech.”

“Sounds rough,” Daichi sympathized, his eyes traveling to the water still running in his bathroom. Though he knew the warm water was being wasted, he couldn’t find it in him to end the conversation. These moments on the phone with Suga were worth more than a few extra dollars on his water bill. Feeling his face warm at the teenage-inspired thought, Daichi tried to focus back
onto whatever Suga was saying. Except when he did, the officer realized that Suga hadn’t responded to his statement. Worried that he had lost connection, Daichi tilted his head closer to the open window. “Suga?”

“I’m still here.” The voice was quieter than before, and Daichi felt the edges of his mouth dipping into a frown. Trying to shake the weird feeling, the officer proposed another question.

“Anything else interesting happen?”

“You could...say that.” The cautious way that Suga was structuring his response was a warning sign for the officer, who now straightened his back and clutched the phone closer to his ear. He didn’t dare speak again, though he patience was rapidly disappearing as he waited for the wedding planner to continue to explain himself. “At the wedding, one of the groomsmen asked me out to dinner.”

“Like a date?” Apparently, his thinly stretched patience snapped at the mention of dinner, though the cop hoped his voice didn’t show just how quickly his stomach dropped.

“Ah, possibly. He mentioned knowing this restaurant with really good seafood and then inquired about the next time I was free from work. When I mentioned it to Oikawa, he seemed pretty adamant it was a date.”

“It makes sense, given what you’ve told me. Seafood Isn't cheap, so it’s probably...a date.” Desperate to keep his jealousy from rearing its ugly head, Daichi clenched his free hand around the edge of the porcelain and forced out a laugh. “Congratulations.”

“I guess that would make sense to say if I hadn’t turned him down.” The flippant way Suga handed out the information shouldn't have made Daichi’s heart swell with relief, the officer taking a second to release the air frozen in his lungs before replying.

“You didn’t like him?”

“He wasn’t exactly ugly, but...” There was a few seconds of silence on the phone, though the dark haired cop refused to break it. Whatever Suga wanted to say, Daichi was willing to wait until the other man sorted out his thoughts. It didn’t take long for the lithe voice of the planner to reach Daichi’s ear. “It wouldn’t have been fair to him.”
“Any reason why?”

“I’m kind of interested in someone else,” Suga admitted, the small confession making Daichi’s throat dry in excitement. He had to swallow twice before he could manage to process and response to the admission.

“And this guy likes you, too?”

“I hope so; I’ve only known him for a couple weeks, and he’s not the easiest man to read.”

“Do I know him?” The blurted out question lacked finesse, and the cop was quick to try and cover up his scattered thoughts. “I’m trained in reading people, so maybe I could help you figure it out.”

“It may be kind of hard for you to interrogate him. Some may even call you crazy if you tried.” The two were hopping around the topic like two middle schoolers at their first dance. By now the heat of his cheeks had spread down his neck, and Daichi moved toward the shower to lower the temperature. By the end of the conversation, he was going to need to take an ice bath just to calm his frantic heartbeat. Pushing the shower curtain seemed to catch the microphone of the phone, Suga’s attention quick to flip the attention away from himself. “What was that?”

“Oh, I was about to jump into the shower before you called me so-”

“Does that mean you’re naked?” The blunt question caught the cop off guard, his hand slipping off the wet metal of the nozzle at Suga’s squeak. “Oh my god, you’re totally naked right now.”

“Is that a bad thing?” Daichi questioned, his lack of clothing suddenly making his modesty flare. It wasn’t as if the other man could see him! Despite this, Suga’s voice seemed on edge as he rushed to answer Daichi’s inquiry.

“No, it’s a great thing! Wait, not great--it’s not like I want you naked yet.” For a man who had been on the wrong side of every conversation between the two, Daichi felt his grin widen as he listened to Suga fumble over himself. Had he just sort of admitted he wanted to see Daichi without clothes on? And that him being naked wasn’t just good, but great? The whole thing was a huge boost to the man’s ego, though Suga seemed mortified of his slip ups. “I should just hang up now.”

“You don’t have to.”
“I do. I really do. So you should just...yeah. Make sure to clean everywhere!” And without another word, Suga hung up. Despite the abrupt end to the talk, Daichi couldn’t find it in him to be mad. Suga had just sounded really cute trying to hide his embarrassment. For a guy who seemed so put together, it was nice to hear that even he got tongue-tied occasionally. Adding to that, the wedding planner had all but admitted that he was interested in Daichi. He wasn’t a betting man by nature, yet the hints that Suga shoved down his throat made it hard not to take a chance.

“He’s probably thinking about me naked.” The rush of pride that inflated his chest was nice, Daichi humming as he placed his phone back onto the sink.

So Suga found him attractive? It felt surreal to the officer, especially when he knew how stunning the fair-haired man was. Suga’s broad smile and delicate features were far more appealing than his own looks. Sure, being a wedding planner didn’t build on the muscle like his job. But the lean form suited Suga’s personality well. Plus, Daichi had never seen Suga’s body beneath his clothes. What did the man look like naked? The question was instantly met with dirty fantasies seared into Daichi’s mind, stealing the breath. His body was quick to react, and Daichi shook his head hard to try and ignore how quick his arousal responded. Yet he couldn’t help but think of how good Suga would look without clothes on.

Distracted by his thoughts, he didn’t notice the fluffy ball of white walking up to him. Sugar let out a bark, the panicked cop swearing before he stumbled over the tub and smashed his cranium into the wall. The ice cold water sprayed over his throbbing head, Sugar more than happy to jump into her owner’s lap to “play”. When the friendly canine’s paw smashed into the man’s unprotected lap, Daichi’s painful shout echoed through his whole apartment. Seconds later, Iwaizumi kicked in the bathroom door, his gun drawn and only an apron covering his boxer-clad body. It took three seconds for Iwaizumi to scope out the scene, his judgmental eyebrow mirroring his flat tone.

“What are you--wait. Nevermind. I don’t want to know.” His partner closed the bathroom door before Daichi could explain, the cop groaning as he dropped his head back onto the wall. Sugar seemed happy with the motion, quick to start licking her owner’s face. The dog was soaking him with slobber and hair, which meant his whole house was going to stink of wet dog. Iwaizumi was never going to let him live this down. And if that wasn’t bad enough, he wasn’t sure if he was ever going to get a hard-on again.

Daichi really hated Mondays.

Chapter End Notes

Oh Daichi, will the man ever get a break? Doubtful with my evil mind. So we finally
get to see some of the pairings starting to talk about feelings, but there's still plenty of time left until the wedding! What are Kuroo's true intentions? Can Suga get past his 'no dating customers' policy? What challenges are ahead for our pairs? And what the heck was Iwaizumi doing before barging into Daichi's apartment?! Kudos and comments are very much appreciated!

Next Chapter: The Other Side of Stoic
The Other Side of Stoic

Chapter Summary

Sometimes, a little smile can go a long way.

Chapter Notes

So I'm going to start uploading these chapters on Sunday since I seem to be way too busy on Saturdays...Ugh! But I hope you enjoy this chapter! =D

Cruising down the driveway of Little Crows on his motorcycle made Iwaizumi realize just how far away the wedding venue was from the rest of society. The long road was full of curves, the surrounding trees making for pretty scenery. There was nothing more relaxing to the cop than taking a solo drive on his bike, though it wasn’t a coincidence that he had wound up at the wedding venue. Daichi, the man with a soft spot for a particular silver-haired planner, had collected some of the RSVP’s from the friends and family in town. His genius plan (which he refused to admit was a plan) had been to bring the invitations on their day off. It had nothing to do with Iwaizumi, so the grumpy cop left his partner to his own devices. If he wanted to make the long trip back to the wedding venue to fumble over his words and make a fool of himself, let him. It seemed like Sugawara liked the attention from his partner if the flirty texts (again, Daichi denied were flirty) were anything to go by. Maybe a Tuesday morning visit would be just what the two needed for one of them to stop dancing around their feelings.

But like a bad joke, the morning that Iwaizumi had planned to do absolutely nothing, Daichi called him. Sugar, being the curious dog that she was, had decided to investigate the bag of chocolates that one of their co-workers had given to Daichi the night before. And by investigate, he meant the canine devoured the whole thing while Daichi was taking a shower. Now stuck in the dog emergency room (Iwaizumi never thought he’d need to put those two words together), Daichi had turned to him to finish the job he had signed up for. Hajime had every right to say no, but the slight strain in Daichi’s voice gave insight to just how anxious he had become over the dog’s condition. Despite the mutt being a pain in the ass, Sugar was a good pet for his friend. She cheered up the serious man with unconditional love and happiness. He could only assume panic was rushing through his partner, as the dog had become a part of their weird family.

And maybe the long ride would help Iwaizumi ignore his own worry for the mutt.

Yanking his helmet off, Iwaizumi untied the box of invitations from the back of his bike before he yanked it under his arm. He could hear the shifting of the envelopes in the big box, and he
wondered just how many Daichi had managed to gather in such a short amount of time. Seriously, the man was in deep for Sugawara. Shaking his head, Hajime jogged up the few steps to the entrance, hoping to find a friendly face. Though he had been shown Sugawara’s office during the tour, he couldn’t say he remembered exactly how to get there. Most of that could be blamed on his horrible tour guide. If Oikawa had been focused on showing them the important parts of the venue instead of Iwaizumi’s bicep size, he wouldn’t be lost. Scoffing at the thought of the weird wedding planner, Iwaizumi started to walk through the spacious building, hoping to stumble onto anyone but Oikawa. The quicker he could deposit the invitations, the smaller the probability of running into the perverted man.

A soft mummering of voices could be heard around the corner of the hallway, and the officer realized too late just who it was. Though his back was to him, Oikawa was a hard man to mistake. Currently, the flirty planner was squaring off to what Iwaizumi could only assume was his next victim. Debating if he wanted to interrupt the man to ask where Sugawara was, the dark haired man caught his first clear snippet of their conversation.

“I’m not a carnival attraction, you know. You can’t pay for a ticket to ride me.” The clipped tone that Oikawa was using was out of character, and it was then that Iwaizumi picked up on how tense his shoulders looked. Hands were placed firmly on his hips, the brunette’s back straight and lacking any sense of friendly demeanor. It wasn’t hard to realize just how displeased he was with his current company, as the officer was always quite perceptive with body language. Right now, the planner’s limbs were practically screaming for space, which his companion refused to pick up on.

“Come on, babe. You’re not even giving me a fair chance.”

“That’s the beauty of being me: I don’t have to.” Sharp tongued and clearly not in the mood to play naive, Oikawa took a step back and made a shooing motion with his hand. “Now go find yourself another chew toy to play with, I’m quite busy at the moment.”

“How am I supposed to leave without some sort of prize? The best man said you’ve got some skill with your mouth, but I’d need first hand experience to really be a judge.”

“I slept with your friend because I thought he was attractive. Whatever game you think you have is not doing it for me. If I wanted to sleep with you, I would have, and yet I still have my pants on. Can you put your context clues together, Dora, or do I need to sing for your map?” The stunned look on the other man almost made Iwaizumi snort, though a slight smirk did twitch at his lips. Who knew the pain in the ass could be so witty? It was almost impressive to Iwaizumi. His personality was shit, and grated on every one of the cop’s nerves, yet he could appreciate just how quick he was with a comeback.

“You’re acting pretty snobby for a guy who sleeps with anything with a pulse.” The bite to the
man’s tone showed he was both embarrassed and angry, though Oikawa simply sighed before he dramatically placed his hand to his heart.

“I’m wounded. Ow. Whatever will I do without your approval?” Sarcasm dripped from each word, and from how Oikawa had turned, Iwaizumi could see the smug smile painted over Oikawa’s lips. “Just remember that you got rejected by the man who ‘sleeps with anything with a pulse’. Think long and hard on that one, babe.”

“Fuck you.”

“Not likely.” The dismissive way Oikawa turned his back to the man was the final insult to injury, and Iwaizumi almost felt the burn from how red the man’s face was. Oikawa’s eyes caught his for a second, lighting up with clarity and an excitement that had been missing during his previous conversation. Before the tailor could call out to the cop, a hand jerked him back, shoving him hard into the wall of the hallway to face his previous discussion partner. Before Oikawa could speak, a hand had snagged his jaw forcefully, making him look up at the rejected man. Brown eyes sharpened like daggers as Oikawa glared, making sure his disgust was palpable even without speech.

“I wasn’t finished talking to you.” It was clear the man did not take the humiliation well, his grip tightening on Oikawa’s face as he spoke. To the wedding planner’s credit he didn’t flinch, though it was clear to the cop that Oikawa wasn’t one to get into a physical altercation. He had a silver tongue, but his fighting skills were doubtful to match. He created dreams for his clients, not bruises. It simply wasn’t a part of his profession.

“You looking to catch an assault charge?” Lucky for the brunette, it was second nature for the cop to get physical. By the time the man had recognized the third man’s appearance, his hands were forcibly removed from Oikawa, the officer now pressing the man hard into the wall. Pinning his arms behind his back, Iwaizumi made sure his shoulder was snug against the middle of the man’s back. “I’m not in the position to arrest your stupid ass, but one call to my department and I can have three officers here in minutes. Ready to go to jail tonight?”

“I wasn’t doing anything! Get off me!” The man tried to struggle against him, but Iwaizumi’s grip was steady. It was no secret in the department that he was one of the strongest in the unit, winning several wrestling contests for charity each year. He prided himself on being in shape, and in cases like this it was easy to see the benefit. Ignoring the man’s irate yelling, the officer sent a sharp glance over to the wide eyed tailor standing a few feet next to him.

“Want me to call the precinct?”
“Oh.” It took a second for Oikawa to respond, but his eyes cleared quickly while he shook his head. “No, that’s fine. I think our friend was just about to go crawl back into whatever sewer he came from. We don’t want the police to get involved, right?”

“...Right.” The other man’s grumble was low, Iwaizumi not taking a chance on him getting another hand on Oikawa.

“Let’s make sure he gets there.” He pulled the man back from the wall, guiding him toward the entrance that he had travelled through minutes earlier. The release of the man’s arms only came once he stumbled onto the front steps. Iwaizumi made sure his body blocked the doorway while he crossed his arms. “If I see you around here again, I’ll be ignoring his request and I’ll press the charges myself. Don’t let me see you.”

“Goodbye!” The sickly sweet voice of Oikawa floated close to Iwaizumi’s ear, a sturdy chest pressing to his back as the wedding planner waved over his shoulder at the retreating man. The cop kept his stance firm until the car peeled out of the parking lot, Iwaizumi letting out a weak snort before stepping back into the hallway. A second later Oikawa was in front of him, brown eyes sparking with intrigue as he stared down at the slightly shorter cop. “Iwa-chan, you were so impressive! Using your muscular physique to man-handle him really was a sight to behold.”

“I wouldn’t have to do anything if you could keep your dick in your pants for more than three seconds.”

“Don’t be so harsh on me, I was just-ow.” The pout on the tailor’s face gave way to a look of pain when he parted his lips a little too wide, the cop catching the twitch in Oikawa’s jaw. Remembering how the brunet’s chin had been squeezed, Iwaizumi huffed before he stepped closer to the flirt and reached his hand up. “Iwa-chan, so bold-”

“Shut up for a second.” The calm command took the tailor by surprise, Iwaizumi not hesitating to turn Oikawa’s face for inspection. The pink marks from the man’s thumb and index finger framed the brunette’s lips, but they looked minor. He doubted they would bruise, though he swiped his thumb against one of the marks to check the sensitivity. “Does that hurt?”

“Only if it gets you to kiss it better.”

“I’m being serious, jackass.” Iwaizumi’s insult made the planner smirk, leaning closer to the cop while pushing his cheek into the man’s palm.
“If I didn’t know any better, I’d say you were concerned about me.” There was a teasing tone entwined in his voice, and Iwaizumi rolled his eyes to show he caught onto it.

“Anyone would be.”

“Wait, you’re really worried?” The pompous act dissolved at the question, and Iwaizumi took a second to observe the other man before he shrugged.

“You’re a pain in the ass, but I don’t want to see you get hurt. So if guys like him keep harassing you, tell me. God knows you’ve got my number from all the damn pictures you send me. But even a guy like you doesn’t need to be treated like that.”

If he hadn’t been so talented in reading the slightest of changes in people’s expressions, Iwaizumi may have missed the way Oikawa’s eyes opened a little wider than normal. He could feel the clenching of teeth just underneath Oikawa’s soft cheek, making his eyebrow raise questioningly. The strange reaction was not what the cop expected from his perverted companion. Had something he said hit a nerve? And if so, why? The questions stayed in his mind, knowing it wasn’t his place to ask. Over the past few weeks, Oikawa had texted him. A lot. And though many of them were full of pointless pictures and lewd comments, he had gotten to learn small parts about the man’s personality. That did not make him an Oikawa expert. Even if he had years, he doubted he’d be able to fully master the complexity of Oikawa. Before witnessing the exchange, the officer assumed that the tailor wasn’t picky with who he spent the night with. But with how clear he made his boundaries with the man, it seemed that there were more layers to the assistant than he thought.

“Iwa-chan…” The soft purr of the dreaded nickname snapped the cop from his musings, realizing that his moment of distraction had given Oikawa time to slip closer to him. Now the man’s lean arms were wrapped around his neck, slender fingers gently carding through the hair at the back of his nape. The previous look of awe was gone, shadowed by half-lidded eyes and an aura that could make a stripper blush. Mentally swearing at letting his guard down, Iwaizumi held back a groan when Oikawa pressed his body into the cop’s personal space. “You really should let me thank you for being my savior. And I could think of a few fun ways to express my overflowing gratitude.”

“Dumbass,” Iwaizumi spat out, shivering at the way Oikawa’s fingernails gently scraped down the back of his neck.

“Let me repay my knight in shining armor. I promise I’ll make it so good for you.” Sensitive nerves were overloaded for a second at the dirty tone paired with how good the tips of Oikawa’s nails felt on his sensitive skin. Refusing to fall victim to the pervert’s trap, the cop quickly shrugged the touch away from him before he ducked under the other arm to separate the two of them.
“I’ll pass.”

“Don’t be so shy, Iwa-chan! I promise I won’t bite hard.” Oikawa’s pout was automatic when Iwaizumi escaped, but the officer ignored it to move back toward the box he had dropped when apprehending the man. Making sure the top was still secure on the box, he straightened back up before holding the box out to Oikawa’s grumpy face.

“If you give this to Sugawara, then we’ll be even.”

“This is not as fun as what I had planned.” The blunt tone in Oikawa’s voice didn’t change the offer, the shorter man waiting until the huffing wedding planner took the box before he shrugged.

“I have a feeling you’ll live, princess.” The owlish look covering the tailor’s face made Iwaizumi smirk, jerking his thumb the front door’s way. “I’m heading out; got to go make sure Daichi’s mutt is doing okay. Make sure your boss gets those, and keep your ass out of trouble.”

“Or what, you’ll arrest me? I may rob a bank if that’s the case.” The flirty wink added to the end of Oikawa’s comment proved the lack of innocence his tone already gave away.

“You’re a piece of work,” the cop countered, Oikawa laughing in response.

“Make sure not to be a stranger, okay? I get so lonely when you’re not here.”

“Yeah, I’ll keep that in mind.” His voice lacked any serious thought of the offer, Iwaizumi spinning on his heel and moving toward the door. He gave a short wave over his shoulder as he spoke. “See ya around, Asskawa.”

Distracted by his thoughts of Sugar while leaving the venue, Iwaizumi missed the troubled look that fell on the now flushed tailor’s face.

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Hinata was late. On a normal day, this fact would be nothing out of the ordinary. Never being the best with time management, the preschool teacher was always running on island time. Meetings,
dinner parties, even the night he was awarded with “Outstanding teacher of the year” from his school, Hinata was a few minutes behind everyone else. It was just a part of who he was, and normally he didn’t really mind. A bright smile and a rushed apology was enough to make most forgive him. Those who couldn’t be swayed easily tended to forget their anger after a few infectious minutes with his charming personality. Yachi liked to say it was sneaky; Hinata simply called it a personal blessing.

But when it came to Kageyama, Hinata knew nothing short of a seppuku would satisfy the grouchy baker.

“It’s his fault I’m super late!” He had planned to wear the same clothes he had at the preschool, not caring about the stains and smears of miscellaneous food on his pants. They were the only ones in the kitchen, and he tended to get even messier helping the frigid baker. Why was he going to change to get messy again? However, on the way to the venue, Suga had called him. Kageyama, being the owner of the worst memory known to man, had forgotten to let Hinata know that he would be assisting in catering a wedding that night. As part of the crew, he was required to wear black clothes, as a party of seventy people would be seeing him. The miscommunication had made Hinata turn back around, dig through his barely touched closet for something semi-decent, and nearly break his scooter from how fast he was driving.

The preschool teacher burst into the kitchen, his apology and insult both stilling on his tongue when realizing the area wasn’t empty. Several people were bustling around the kitchen, all in black with hair far neater than the orange mess atop Hinata’s head. They must had been the waiting crew, if the empty plates balanced on skilled hands were anything to by.

“Behind!” When one nearly ran into his frozen form, Hinata decided standing in the middle of the chaos was not a safe place to be. First thing he needed to do was find Kageyama. Doing his best to weave through the waiters and waitresses, Hinata slinked his way around while keeping a keen eye out for the tall baker. It took him a few minutes to find Kageyama, but when he did, his mind momentarily slowed.

Kageyama looked really good in black. The professional attire he wore was different than his normal chef jacket, the red tie contrasting the dark blue of his eyes. The bangs that normally covered his forehead were swept to the side, making the silky strands look soft and fluffy. A few strands at the top of his head refused to stay down, but Hinata couldn’t find the means to care. Paired with the button down black shirt and form fitting dress pants, the baker was a sight to see. The new look took Hinata a few seconds to acclimate to, and when he returned to the present, Kageyama’s glare was directed at him.

“Dumbass, get over here.” Hinata huffed at the insult, trying to blame his flushed cheeks on his anger as he stomped over to the irritated baker.
“What the hell, Kageyama?! Why didn’t you tell me I was going to be helping in a wedding tonight!”

“Forgot.” The one worded reply showed how little he cared about the conversation, his eyes darting over Hinata’s shoulder to call to a man by the cooling racks. “Kinoshita-san, what’s the status on the cinnamon spice cake?”

“Just finished cooling; still needs to be frosted to get it ready for serving.” At the man’s words, Kageyama swore, his hand racking through his bangs while his attention shifted to another part of the kitchen.

“For now, I want Narita’s team to start plating the other two cake options. Those who aren’t helping Narita should be out at the tables getting the orders from each group. Write down the number of the table and the tally of each style of cake. Understood?” It was strange to hear Kageyama speak to the group of wedding helpers, especially since Hinata knew first hand how much he hated conversation. But from the slight strain in the normally composed man’s voice, it was obvious his stress was overshadowing his nerves. The group was in motion as soon as the words were out of his mouth, Kageyama glancing down to Hinata with a scowl. “What are you looking at?”

“You look like you’re about to pass out.” The blunt words made Kageyama tense, his eyes sharpening despite the red scorching his cheeks.

“Shut up.”

“Did something go wrong?” When Kageyama turned away from him to cross the bustling kitchen, Hinata followed, his voice rising over the noise of the other workers. “And what’s up with the multiple cakes?”

“The groom’s mother, step mother, and father refused to agree on a cake. Trying to please all three, the couple asked if we could make multiple cakes.” Kageyama’s irritation was quite clear on his face as he moved to a bowl of frosting another baker was finishing, giving him a soft direction that Hinata hadn’t been able to hear. The woman nodded before she scurried over to the man Kageyama had put in charge of frosting the cake. Kageyama took a quick glance to the clock on the wall, his teeth showing themselves when he clenched them. “But none of them bothered to let Suga-san know about the change of cake choices until this morning.”

“That’s why you’re so far behind.” A murderous glare made Hinata’s spike straighten as he took a few steps back, bumping into one of the waitresses passing by. He quickly shouted out a ‘sorry!’ to
the girl before turning back to Kageyama, who had already pointed toward the table with the
unfinished dessert.

“Go help Kinoshita-san with the cake before I strangle you.”

“Fine, no need to be rude,” Hinata muttered, quick to duck under the hand that reached for his head
before he scampered to the opposite side of the kitchen. By the time he got over to his new task,
the man named Kinoshita had a knowing smile on his face.

“I’m gonna guess you’re Shouyou.” The look of surprise must have been easy to see from the
casual shrug the new man gave him. “Sugawara-san told us to help you out since it’s your first time
working a wedding. Though from how many daggers Kageyama is mentally throwing at the back
of your head, I’m thinking learning to plate will be the least of your worries.”

“Is he that snappy with everyone?” Hinata griped, accepting the baker’s tool he had no idea how to
use. Kinoshita shook his head at the question, spinning the large cake on the turntable in order to
smooth out the pink frosting. Hinata watched in awe as the man easily perfected the look of the
dessert, even as he glanced up at Hinata and spoke.

“Normally he’s not like this; Kageyama’s pretty quiet when we’re working together. It’s just
stressful for any baker to be asked to change something so close to the wedding. The fact that
Kageyama was able to bake two additional cakes in the small timeframe they gave him while
doing the rest of the prep work is just a example of his skill.”

“So is he like the king of all bakers?” Hinata asked, exchanging the flattened spatula for the iron
looking tool Kinoshita previously had used.

“He’d probably punch you for calling him that, but he’s pretty high up there for skill. Before he
worked here, we went to school together. I remember hearing after I left that some of the best
bakeries in the world wanted them to come work for him,” Kinoshita explained, swiping the
overlapping frosting at the top of the cake to give a consistent look. He made the skill look easy,
but Hinata knew that if he had tried the same tactic, it would have been a disaster. Instead he
quietly watched, listening while Kinoshita enlightened him on the baker’s past. “When he decided
to come work here, a lot of our classmates called him a coward. Said he got too nervous to compete
with the big dogs or something. I never believed it, though. Each time I come here to help cater a
wedding, it’s obvious he’s gotten even better. I guess he just likes working with Sugawara and the
others.”

“I never knew he was that good.” A quick glance to Kageyama showed he was plating the largest
of the three cakes, easily separating the pieces with equal servings. Even as he did it, his eyes were constantly moving, checking each station to make sure everyone was working at a good pace. He didn’t simply dish out orders; he was throwing himself into the mix, lending a hand when needed while still steering the ship. To be able to juggle so many tasks at once was a headache for Hinata, and he wasn’t even the one doing the work! He could only imagine how Kageyama felt, yet for the most part the man was keeping it together.

“Finished over here, Kageyama.” Kinoshita glanced back to Hinata, who had unknowingly gathered all of the frosting covered tools into his hands. “Go toss those into the sink and I’ll have you help me plate these pieces.”

“Right!” Off like a rocket Hinata went, now weaving through the mass of waiting staff with ease. It took him a few moments to get his bearings when arriving, but the short man was good at adapting to new situations. It was easy work to drop the frosting tools into the sink, his smile bright at accomplishing the simple task. He wasn’t a cake master, but he could still be useful! Returning to Kinoshita’s side, he was eager to assist in the next task, the two making quick work of the cake. It was an easy system to adapt to, and by the time the servers had come to retrieve the cake pieces, the two men had succeeded in separating the last two slices. As quick as they had been cut they were gone, whisked away to the awaiting tables of guests. Kinoshita gave a casual salute to Hinata before he too left the kitchen, the small man letting out a tired sigh while closing his eyes and leaning onto the counter. The kitchen now felt huge with the absence of people.

“Yo.” Slowly Hinata’s eyes reopened, glancing up to see Kageyama by the opposite counter. His hair was a little frazzled from the sweat on his forehead, but his eyes were just as sharp as ever. “Come here.”

“Shouldn’t we be going to check on the tables?” Hinata asked, wary of getting closer to the man. A roll of blue eyes showed Kageyama thought the question was stupid, his arms crossing over his chest.

“I let Narita and Kinoshita handle the people side of the business. Once the bride and groom have cut their ceremonial cake, I come back here.” The explanation fit the baker’s introverted nature quite well. It didn’t seem like Kageyama’s style to enjoy being in the spotlight for his work. Instead the baker took a step to the left of his counter, Hinata’s attention darting down to the sole slice of cake laying on a folded up napkin.

“That looks so good,” Hinata mumbled, feeling his mouth salivating at the sight. The dark red fondant flowers contrasted perfectly against the white frosting, a rich looking chocolate cake hidden beneath. Even separated from the other pieces, it was perfectly cut, the mastery of Kageyama’s decorating skills on full display. The sweet tooth inside of him begged to devour the dessert, his tongue constantly pressing to his lips as he glanced up at Kageyama. “Why didn’t you send it out with the others?”
“It’s for you, idiot.” The urge to smash the baker’s face into the teasing treat was squashed when Kageyama glanced out the window, long fingers tangling in front of him as he spoke. “It’s for forgetting to tell you about the attire. Turns out we didn’t need you on the floor, but I should have been more aware of the situation and gave you ample notice.”

“I can really eat it?” He tried not to sound too eager about the act of kindness, but realizing Kageyama had held back some cake just to give a roundabout apology made his desire to eat it double.

“Well it’s not just for you to look at!” The baker barked out, Hinata ignoring the tone to skip over to the other side of the kitchen.

Instantly his hand went to the fork, not hesitating to pop a piece into his mouth. He felt his toes curl in his shoes at the sugary taste of perfection on his tongue. Kinoshita wasn’t kidding; Kageyama’s cakes were out of this world. And for someone who had eaten his body weight in sweets, he would know. Humming to show his appreciation over the flavor, Hinata took another large bite and grinned. He knew he should have offered to share. After all, Kageyama was the one who put all the actual work into the cake. While he was debating how to try and split up the rest of the quickly disappearing morsel, a warm hand on his head paused all train of thought. The fingers felt stiff on his head as they ruffled his hair, Hinata’s eyes trained on the closeness of Kageyama’s feet to his own.

“Kage...yama?” Hinata forced out, his slow swallow having nothing to do with the mouth-watering cake.

“G-Good job today.” The awkward tone in the baker’s voice proved he wasn’t used to giving compliments, and the teacher felt an instant need to capture the look on Kageyama’s face with his own eyes. Peeking up through his smooshed hair, the shorter man’s breath stuttered at the sight. Though Kageyama still wasn’t looking at him, the rosy color on his face only elevated the unsettling attractiveness he possessed. The hair he had tried so hard to control won its revolt, swaying back to rest on the pale skin of his forehead. His lips were caught between a smile and a frown, yet there was something so genuine in his expression that Hinata nearly dropped his fork from the heat that ran wild through his body.

Logically, the reaction made no sense; even with attractive women who treated him well, Shouyou had never had a physical response like this. His lungs felt tight and his stomach clenched with warmth, as if he had been given a free pass to eat any cake Kageyama baked for the rest of his life. The painful thump of his pulse was only challenged by his heartbeat, the smaller man feeling as if he had run a marathon. The touch on his head felt so comforting now, and after a second Hinata realized he wanted to lean into the touch. What was wrong with him?
“Hinata?” It took him a moment to realize that Kageyama had called to him, the teacher jumping back a few steps to separate the two of them. A cocked eyebrow from Kageyama proved he was acting strange, but before the man could question him, Narita poked his head into the kitchen.

“Kageyama, Sugawara-san is looking for you.”

“Okay, thank you.” Walking toward the exit of the kitchen, Kageyama sent a glance back to Hinata and shrugged. “You look like you’ve got a fever, so you should go home. I don’t need you getting everyone else sick.”

“Fever?” Hinata repeated, pressing his fingers to his cheek to feel the hot skin there. Kageyama nodded, pressing his hand to the heavy door before pausing in his walk.

“You work with kids; they carry plenty of viruses. If you’re sick in two weeks, then I can’t use you for-”

“Next week!” The blurted out response cut off the baker, Hinata squaring off to look at him while he gave a short nod. “I learned a lot today, so I’ve decided I’m going to come every week!”

“That’s not the arrangement.” Was Kageyama’s instant reply, the oranged haired man refusing to take that for an answer.

“So what? I want to come next week.” Seeming to want to avoid the fight, the baker scoffed before he relented.

“If you get in my way, I’m kicking you out.”

“I won’t, promise.” There was a serious tone in Hinata’s voice that seemed to catch the baker’s attention, the lingering gaze between them making Hinata’s fingertips tingle. The baker’s lips parted to reply, but a sickly sweet noise wafted through the air.

“Tobio-kun, where are you?” Oikawa’s voice was enough to set Kageyama into action, the baker not wasting time saying goodbye before he fled. Hinata was left alone in the kitchen, the giddy feeling bubbling in his chest clashing with the panic seeping in his mind.
He couldn’t shake either feeling when he went to bed that night.

~**~

Tsukishima was ready to kill someone. Whoever thought having Hinata, Tanaka, and Noya in the same room that Thursday afternoon was clinically insane. The only reason he refused to kill all three was that by legal terms, it would label him as a serial killer, and jury were more likely to sentence him to death. The fact that cops were sitting on either side of him were the only reasons all three were currently still breathing. The lawyer watched as Hinata practically bounced around the spacious room. He had been told that this was Oikawa’s office, though it looked more like the back of a seamstress’s workspace than a place to do business. Dresses were hung up throughout the space, mirrors and fitting platforms in abundance. The labels on most of the items were written in such poor handwriting, that even when wearing his glasses, Tsukishima couldn’t decipher it as human.

Well, the writing matched the owner in that case.

“Noya! Come check out this hat!” Hinata’s loud voice was full of pride as he slammed the floppy woman’s hat onto his head, the brim decorated with bright flowers that Tsukishima found his gaze lingering on for a few seconds longer than necessary. “Wah, it’s so big!”

“Hinata, put down the hat, or I’ll make you buy it.” Daichi’s stern voice showed that his patience was running as thin as the lawyer’s, Tsukishima getting a sadistic satisfaction from how quickly the teacher’s face paled. Living on the small paycheck he did, the midget’s wallet was always on the empty side. Though it would be chump change for the lawyer, he was sure Hinata wouldn’t feel the same. Deciding to stoke the cop’s fire, Tsukishima let his casual gaze flicker over to the bald man currently creating mischief in the corner.

“If Hinata has to buy the hat, can we make Tanaka-san wear that dress to the wedding?” The other best man froze at the attention, an aqua bridesmaid gown hanging around his neck. Noya was hysterically laughing on the ground next to the platform Tanaka was currently posing on, Ennoshita smacking his forehead with his palm as he mumbled about ‘troubling friends’. A well placed look from Daichi had the bald man scrambling to toss off the dress, though thought better of his choice before carefully placing it back on the dress rack he had grabbed it from.

“I think Iwa-chan would look stunning in that color.” Oikawa’s smile was bright as he waltzed into the room, though the pompous tailor wasn’t what caught the blonde’s attention. That honor went to the man quietly following behind Oikawa. Though not covered in dirt and flowers, Yamaguchi still looked quite meek in comparison to the overinflated ego of the man who now draped a casual arm
around his shoulders. “Don’t you think so, my sweet little daisy?”

“Just say the word, Yamaguchi, and I’ll arrest him for sexual harassment.” Iwaizumi’s words were met with a wave from Oikawa, Noya popping into the conversation next to Yamaguchi.

“Yamaguchi, what are you doing here?”

“Ah, well, I know a little bit about measurements, so I offered to help Oikawa-san.” The hesitant smile from the florist was unsteady at best, his eyes briefly finding Tsukishima’s before looking back to Noya. “I’m not nearly as capable as him, but he’ll be able to correct anything he feels isn’t right.”

“I’m sure you’ll do fine! Get a little confidence in yourself.” Oikawa’s words were paired with a few pats to the top of Yamaguchi’s head, the tailor taking a large step to the group before he clasped his hands together and smiled. “Alright then, let’s get started. Gentlemen, I’ll be needing you to strip.”

“Excuse me?” The flat tone Tsukishima used clearly showed his opposition to the request. He wasn’t the only one; Asahi’s face looked identical to a fire hydrant, and Iwaizumi nearly snapped his neck with how quickly his head whipped to glare at the tailor. Oikawa simply smirked at the reactions, Yamaguchi rushing to amend the statement.

“He means we’ll need you to take off any scarves or jackets you’re wearing. There’s no need for you to get na-naked or anything!”

“If I knew you were going to ruin all my fun, I would have told you to stay in the greenhouse,” Oikawa griped, his pout evident in his words while he sent a half-lidded gaze Iwaizumi’s way. “I was really looking forward to seeing if I had guessed all your sizes right.”

“You better be talking about our waist measurements,” the cop warned, Oikawa pressing his fingertip to the middle of his lips with a wink.

“I’d just like to know what I’m working with. You know, for future endeavours.”

“Do you ever shut up?” Rolling his eyes, Iwaizumi shrugged off his jacket and dropped it onto the seat behind him. “Last time I checked, you don’t need to talk to do your job.”
“Always the cranky one. I’ll be nice to my sweet pea and take grumpy gills.” Scanning the group with the first serious look since entering the room, the tall brunette nodded at whatever his creative mind had decided. “Let’s split them up by their height. If I give you an odd number, go to the left of the room. Evens to the right. You ready?”

“This feels like what the teachers used to do in math class,” Tanaka complained, Ennoshita laughing at the disgruntled look his friend made. Seeing a perfect opportunity, Tsukishima smirked before casually responding.

“They did that because they were worried nobody would choose to work with you.”

“What did you say?!” Snickering as Tanaka responded as volatile as he expected, the lawyer simply shrugged in mocked innocent before he turned his attention back to the two wedding planners in front of him. The separating of the group was simple, though Tsukishima disliked being in the same group as both Hinata and Tanaka. Ennoshita was little help to stop the rambunctious two from getting excited over the smallest piece of dirt. The only benefit of the grouping was that he had been shifted to the right, where Yamaguchi was setting up his supplies. If he was being honest, he should have wanted to be paired with Oikawa. Yamaguchi had voiced that he wasn’t as skilled as the other man, and Tsukishima preferred to deal with the best option possible. Despite how elementary it was to take measurements, a miscalculation could result in an awkward fitting tux.

In a normal situation, the lawyer would have simply stated he would only work with Oikawa, making the others formulate a plan around his firm decision. Yet his voice stayed mute while watching Yamaguchi politely bow to Hinata. While Oikawa was more than a little talkative as he “measured” each of his groomsmen, the florist kept his voice soft. Maybe it was Oikawa’s experience or overconfidence that let him flirt with each man while he worked. It was more than a little amusing to Tsukishima to see Daichi’s well hidden modesty flare up at the tailor’s intrusive questioning about his body, claiming he was asking ’for a friend.’ And when the tailor gave a hum of approval when pressing the tape along the muscular thigh of the cop, Daichi looked two shades away from dying of mortification.

Yamaguchi was different, though the blonde expected as much. His eyes were concentrated on getting each of the numbers right, apologizing to Tanaka when asking to re-measure his arm span. He did engage in simple conversation with Ennoshita when wrapping the tape around his waist, complimenting the student on his brand of shirt. It didn’t feel pretentious or filled with ulterior motives; the flower child genuinely liked the man’s choice in clothing, and felt the desire to let him know. Was this naive fool made of pure honesty and innocent charm? The lawyer felt himself shaking his head, reminding himself that the defenseless man was not his problem. If anything, he was his enemy, as their bet had yet to be resolved.
“Shittykawa, you brush your hand near my ass again and I’ll chop it off.” The threatening tone that Iwaizumi used was met with an innocent look from the tailor, who tried to look confused despite the mentioned appendage still firm on the back of Iwaizumi’s thigh.

“No need to get so defensive, Iwa-chan. I’m simply trying to get all your measurements accurate.”

“I should have went to Yamaguchi; you know, the nice tailor,” Iwaizumi grumbled, though Tsukishima saw a twinge of a smirk on the cops face when Oikawa’s mouth dropped open in shock.

“You wouldn’t dare!”

“I’m tempted.”

“That’s cause our tailor is the best!” Tanaka’s boasting over the stupid competition made Tsukishima scoff, though Hinata was quick to start chanting Yamaguchi’s name. The look of bashful uneasiness made Yamaguchi quick to shake his head, his hands tightening on the tape measurer.

“That’s not exactly true. Oikawa-san is fantastic at his job.” Looking to change the subject, the florist turned toward Tsukishima and gave a lopsided smile. “I’ll do your measurements-”

“It is true that I didn’t hear Yamaguchi flirt once during his measurements,” Daichi added in, laughing at the scrunching of Oikawa’s nose. Crossing his arms, the tailor lifted his nose in the air to show his lack of interest in the conversation.

“That’s because he doesn’t know how to flirt. Our little Yamaguchi is still a lily white virgin, after all.” The loud proclamation seemed to echo from the silence that followed it. Though the statement didn’t seem like a big deal to Tsukishima, he noticed how quickly the man beside him tensed. Stealing a glance from the corner of his eye, the lawyer caught the pure look of mortification that washed over the freckled man’s face. It wasn’t the same twinges of embarrassment or modesty he held when someone was teasing him or complimenting his skill. Yamaguchi was truly affected by Oikawa’s declaration. And that, for some reason, affected him as well.

It made no sense. Tsukishima thrived on one upping people. It was part of why he always tended to take the side of lower odds winning. Being able to rub it into a rich man’s face when his wife won her case was almost as sweet as finding out just how many times the husband ‘worked out’ with
the guy down the street. Humiliating someone was just second nature to Tsukishima. Hell, sometimes he hung out with Hinata just to find new things to bug him about. Tanaka’s lack of maintaining a relationship was always fair game to the lawyer. But here, in this moment, he didn’t want to jump on Oikawa’s band wagon. Seeing Yamaguchi’s face flush in humiliation was a completely different ballgame.

“Last time I checked, Hinata’s score is still zero.” The taunting voice he used was an easy way to make the pre-school teacher schwack in protest, though the lawyer didn’t stop there. “I’m pretty sure his students were giving him pointers, but gave up. Even preschoolers know a lost cause when they see one.”

“I-I totally have experience!” The obvious lie was so apparent in Hinata’s voice, the room burst into laughter while Noya slapped him on the shoulder and snickered. Now red as a cherry, Hinata sent a glare toward Tsukishima, though the blonde didn’t give it a second thought. Instead he turned his attention to Yamaguchi, the freckled florist doing his best to smile while watching Noya try to cheer his blushing friend up. It was so obvious that he was still feeling the aftereffects of Oikawa’s words. Even when he turned to the lawyer to finish the measurements, he kept his eyes downcast and his speaking to a minimum. The stupid group he was with instantly blamed him for “scaring” Yamaguchi into silence, but the tall man knew better. If the hasty way the man collected his supplies wasn’t a red flag, the horrible excuse of “checking on his flowers” while practically sprinting from the room was.

It only took Tsukishima a moment to ‘tsk’ and shove his hand into his pocket.

“Daichi-san.”

“What’s up?” Flashing his phone to imply it was ringing to Daichi, the cop gave a nod of understanding before the lawyer left the room, dropping the device back into his pocket. It wasn’t uncommon for Tsukishima to get a phone call unexpectedly, so using it as an excuse to leave was never questioned. The man walked into the hallway as he glanced both ways, wondering which way the man in question went.

“Hey there, Tsukki.” The smooth voice of a familiar photographer made Tsukishima’s lips press tightly together, turning his body to see the tall man sitting on the ledge of the window. The camera hanging around his neck implied he was taking photos, though gave no implication as to what his focus was on. Currently, however, it was clear that Kuroo’s eyes were trained on him. “You looking for something?”

“Cell service,” Tsukishima answered, trying to keep his eye from twitching when Kuroo’s weak hum implied he didn’t believe the answer.
“Weird, I’ve never had problem with that here.”

“Lucky you.”

“I wonder if Yamaguchi has any trouble with that; it would explain why he came running out that very same door you did.” Kuroo was playing with him. Though the man’s posture was casual and inviting, the golden eyes showed the truth behind Kuroo’s words. Like a cat toying with a mouse before devouring him, the photographer casually ran a hand through his stupid looking hairdo and sighed. “I never would think our flower child would get so upset over electronics. He looked ready to cry.”

“Then as his friend, shouldn’t you go take care of him?” Tsukishima’s snappy comment was his attempt to cover the tug in his stomach, though Kuroo didn’t seem to mind.

“Maybe, or maybe someone else should.” If the lawyer was anyone else, he was sure his face would be flushed by the purposeful stare the dark haired man sent his way. The intensity was strong for only a moment before Kuroo shrugged, his camera being lifted to his eye before he turned back to the window. “You’d have better luck finding what you’re looking for outside. If I had to guess, the best spot would probably be at the swingset behind the gazebo. It’s a great place to go when you want to be alone...or, you know, get cell service.”

“I’ll keep that in mind,” Tsukishima answered, his feet moving before he had finished his sentence.

“Good luck.” Ignoring the implication behind the man’s words, the blond didn’t waste time replying while he left the hallway. It only took a few minutes to locate the swings that Kuroo had hinted at. Looking like a place for younger children to play while their parents dealt with wedding semantics, its only inhabitant was the freckled man that had fled earlier. His basket of supplies were dropped on the ground, Yamaguchi’s hands tight on the chains that held up his swing. From the downcast face and slump in his shoulders, it was obvious that the man was upset. The pathetic display made the lawyer snort, making the florist’s head jerk up in surprise.

“T-Tsukki? What are you-”

“You look like someone just shot your dog.” The blunt reply had brown eyes widening in surprise, though that emotion quickly gave way to a flood of guilt as Yamaguchi glanced away and shrugged.
“Ah, sorry.”

“Why did you let that idiot walk all over you?” Moving toward the swing beside the florist, Tsukishima gave a sour look to the dusty rubber before he sat down. Once steady on the seat, he tried to find the man’s eyes again, though they looked quite content boring holes into the ground. “Next time he opens his mouth, just insult his lack of progress with Iwaizumi. I could think of seven things just off the top of my head that would put that pompous pervert in his place.”

“Sorry.” This apology was smaller than the first one, and it was easy to see that Tsukishima’s tactic was only deepening Yamaguchi’s embarrassment. “I guess I should be used to letting people pick on me, but I wasn’t expecting that.”

“Why would you be accustomed to it?”

“Well, I wasn’t exactly Mr.Popular in school.” A shy brush of his nose showed that the brunet felt insecure over his statement, even if he tried to smile through the explanation. “I had a lot of stuff for people to made fun of. I’ve got all these weird things about me; I like flowers, I’m covered in freckles, my hair grows in a funny way, I’m pretty scrawny...I guess since I look like a dork, it’s always been easy to tease me.”

“You’re not ugly.” The straightforward comment made Yamaguchi sit up straight, Tsukishima now finding interest in the sway of the tree branches above them. “I’d expect these excuses from someone who lacked in the appearance category, such as Tanaka, but that’s not your case. Your freckles suit you, as does your haircut and lack of overcompensating muscle definition. These features make you more approachable in your line of work. A job such as a florist has no reason for bulging pectorals. Smart individuals use their strengths in order to better themselves and put them ahead of their competition. Oikawa-san has a dramatic and playful nature which he turned into a talent by becoming a tailor for the biggest party a woman can throw. You worked your unintimidating nature by finding a career which fits you. It’s a testament to your intelligence.”

“I...never thought of it that way,” Yamaguchi admitted, the rose color to his cheeks no longer being tinged with negative feelings. The florist let the swing sway a few times before he looked up at the lawyer and gave a meek smile. “Thanks for cheering me up, Tsukki.”

“Don’t make assumptions,” Tsukishima scolded, keeping his face stoic. “This is just because people like Oikawa-san are particularly annoying.”

“Oikawa-san?”
“His obsession with sex. It’s not nearly as important as people imply it is in a relationship.” He should have realized earlier that the other man was a virgin by how red his face got whenever the topic was brought up.

“So then...what do you look for in a boyfriend?” There was a heartbeat of silence between them, the creaking on the swing’s old chains seeming to amplify in sound. Tsukishima rolled his eyes before he pushed off his swing, dusting the back of his jeans.

“Shut up, Yamaguchi.”

“Sorry, Tsukki!” But unlike his previous apologies, this one was followed by a bout of laughter which implied the florist’s earlier melancholy was gone. It was a weird sort of sound, but the lawyer could think of a hundred other noises that were more grating on the ears.

“Your focus should be on trying to win our bet.” A casual glance behind his glasses toward the quieting florist made sure that the man heard his next taunting statement. “Or have you realized you’re in over your head?”

“No way! I’m still in it to win.” The brunet popped out of his swing after the brazen statement, moving to stand in front of the taller blond. “In fact, I was thinking you should come the greenhouse next week. If I don’t have any clients, I can give you an actual tour of my whole garden.”

“What a thrilling friday night.” The sarcasm was heavy in Tsukishima’s voice, but it didn’t seem to deter Yamaguchi.

“I’ll take that as a yes.” Like being told he won a million dollars, Yamaguchi’s smile was bright as he scrambled over to his basket of supplies. Both hands were tight around the handle as he peeked back up at Tsukishima, swinging the basket while he spoke. “Or if you’re not busy now…”

“I’m actually due for a conference call in the next fifteen minutes.” To emphasis the point, the lawyer lifted the phone from his pocket and gave it a slight wave. Being out of the office was a nice change of pace, but he still had hours of work to catch up on. Yamaguchi took the quiet refusal well, nodding before he glanced back to the swings.

“Well I won’t take up any more of your time. Oh!” The idea that popped into Yamaguchi’s head
seemed to lose some of it’s appeal on second thought from the loss of spark in his eyes.

“Yes?” Tsukishima raised an eyebrow at the weird look Yamaguchi’s face made as he seemed to struggle with himself. The blonde was sure he heard the florist mumble ‘just do it’ to himself before he was moving, reaching up to grab the device from Tsukishima’s hand. Taken aback by the bold move, the lawyer didn’t fight the movement, watching silently as Yamaguchi typed something into the touchpad. Each button he clicked seemed to darken the color on the man’s face, and he could be compared to a stop sign when he shoved the phone back into Tsukishima’s possession.

“Uh, for when you want to come by. Just..give me a call? O-Or a text. Either’s fine! Okay? See you around, Tsukki!” A second later Yamaguchi was gone, the florist clutching the basket like a lifeline to his chest as he scurried past the gazebo. The speed that the smaller man possessed made Tsukishima blink, wondering if he had acquired it from running from those who teased him in the past.

Glancing back down to the screen, he released a scoff when realizing that the freckled man had been too scattered to even write his name. Had he even noticed the number wasn’t even saved yet? From how panicked his voice had sounded at the end, he doubted it. Tsukishima was used to the nervous aura people oozed when he walked into a room, as he was known for making most sweat. Yet there was something a little different about the florist; when it came to their bet, he shed any sense of fear. Most wet their pants when dealing with a stipulation involving the intelligent lawyer (something he revelled in). Yet the only time Yamaguchi become a blushing, stuttering freckled mess, was when they didn’t talk about the bet. What the heck was that about?

His eyes refusing to waver from the screen, Tsukishima knew he could just erase the phone number and later blame it on the incompetency of the florist. Then he wouldn’t be burdened with making plans with someone. And seriously, what self-respecting lawyer would consider going to a greenhouse for fun? He finally looked back to the path the mousy man had used to escape, remembering the overexerting smile Yamaguchi had after his ‘pep talk’. A image that should have irritated him for it’s sheer stupidity.

Yet it was that memory that had him save “Flower King” into his phone seconds before his conference call came in.

Chapter End Notes

So much action, so little time! I wanted to give you a sprinkle of some of the other relationships I haven't been able to focus on. I hope that you all enjoyed it. So, why did Oikawa look so troubled? Is Hinata's feeling surpassing a simple friendship? Will Tsukishima reach out to Yamaguchi? And which couple may push the boundaries of
friendship next chapter? Find out soon! Kudos and Comments are always welcome ^.^

Next Chapter- Carpe Diem!
Carpe Diem!

Chapter Summary

It was about time they seized the day.

Chapter Notes

Happy Sunday everyone!! I'm so excited to be posting this chapter, and I'm hoping you'll all love it as much as I do. =)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“It’s disgusting how much time you spend in this office.” Suga’s eyes peeled off the papers on his desk to his assistant leaning against the doorway of the office, his arms crossed and his cheeks puffed. “I mean, you understand there’s a world out there? With trees, birds, and hot men?”

“Hot men won’t help me determine the best time for the orchestra to show up for the wedding next week,” Suga replied, Oikawa’s eyebrow shooting up to contest the statement.

“You’re not hanging around the right type of men, then.”

“Did you need something, Tooru?”

“Just coming to report to my superior that our whimsical little baker has evaded me yet again and left for the night.” The long sigh that echoed through the office proved that Suga was supposed to empathize with the brunet. Instead, Suga pulled the reading glasses off his nose to drop them to the desk, knowing the improbability of finishing work until Oikawa left. “Where are Kenma and Kuroo?”

“Photo shoot. The couple that met on the cruise wanted to do their engagement pictures on a boat. They won’t be back until late, though they might just go home instead of coming here.”

“I want their job; they get to do all the fun stuff!” Oikawa whined, Suga trying to hide his smile from the childish tone.
“And since Yamaguchi went to his high school reunion, there’s nobody here for you play with. I’m guessing you’re bored?”

“Or an opportunist.” Moving to the front of the desk, Oikawa pressed his palms flat on the wood while trying to lean into Suga’s personal space. “Having sex on my boss’s desk has always been a secret fantasy of mine. And you know what they say; ‘when the mice are away, the cats will play’.”

“You’ve got that backwards. And I’m not sure my desk can hold your weight.” The appalled look on Tooru’s face made Suga lose his composure, laughing through a broad smile stretching his lips. Not finding the reply amusing, the assistant snatched a chocolate from Suga’s candy dish before stomping away, flopping onto one of the couches.

“And people say I’m the sassy one. They just don’t see the real Sugawara monster. I bet Daichi-chanchan wouldn’t find you cute right now.” The mention of the cop was unexpected, and Suga found himself rushing to change the subject in order to hide the skip in his chest.

“Did you finish everything for the wedding tomorrow?”

“It was done before I went on my Tobio-kun hunt.” Now chewing on the chocolate, Oikawa glanced to the clock before he grinned and turned to look at Suga. “I made sure to finish early tonight since I’ve got a lovely date planned with that Brazilian bridesmaid.”

“Well don’t let me hold you up,” Suga teased, Oikawa rolling his eyes before leaning his chin on the back of the couch.

“You’ll always be my number one. Until death do us part.”

“Who knew you could be so romantic?” At the mention of intimacy, Oikawa scoffed, Suga watching in amusement as the assistant flipped his bangs with the back of his hand.

“Gross.”

“Love isn’t so bad, you know,” Suga argued, Tooru losing his look of disgust to glance out the
window at the moonlit sky.

“Some people are just not made to be loved.” The response wasn’t filled with the snarky wit Suga had been expecting. It had a weird edge to it, the wedding planner unable to articulate the underlying emotion. He was hardly given a chance to mull it over before the sound of his phone cut through the air, Suga reaching over his desk to pull the phone to his ear.

“Hello, this is Suga-”

“Suga-san!” The sob of his name was a sound that the planner was more used to than he wanted to admit. Checking the caller ID, he recognized the number as his bride for the next night’s wedding. That made the situation a little more serious, as she was not one to cry wolf. The woman had lost both of her parents when she was a child, and then was diagnosed with cancer a week after her fiance proposed to her. Money, fortune, and good news had always been a rarity for her, yet she refused to give up. The woman had been to hell and back, going through chemo and paying her own bills with the small amount of money she and her fiance had managed to save up for their dream wedding.

Now, two years of being cancer-free, the woman had worked tooth and nail to make her special day everything she deserved. It was a tight budget, and Sugawara had ‘miscalculated’ some of his normal pricing. Maybe Kuroo had slipped in a few extra pictures, free of charge. Yamaguchi’s trip to his hometown may have been fueled by his desire to find wild snapdragons, a flower that symbolizes graciousness and strength. And if Suga had noticed the extra intricacy of the four-tiered champagne flavored cake Kageyama had finished that morning, he wasn’t about to comment on it. Even Tooru, the man with no empathy toward wedding bliss, had practically worked double time to create the woman’s asymmetrical dream dress. And through the ups and downs, the woman never cried.

Until now.

“They’re ruined. All of them.” Suga could tell she was trying to reign in her emotions, but the muffled sob could be heard through the phone.

“What’s ruined?” He asked, trying to think of what the woman was talking about. Most of her wedding supplies were already at the venue, which made it easier for them to set up in the morning. The only thing that the woman had yet to bring there was-- “Do you mean the centerpieces?”

“I had put them in the basement to dry the ink without the cats getting to them,” The bride
explained, her voice shaking while she continued. “But it rained this afternoon, and we left the window open down there. By the time I realized-I’m so sorry, this is all my fault! After all you’ve done for me, I should have taken better care of them.”

“It’s okay, people make mistakes. You’re human, just like the rest of us.”

“But I’ve got twenty tables, and they took so long to make. I still have to go pick up my mother at the airport-”

“Please calm down,” Suga consoled, his need to support his bride overriding anything else. “What if I make you new ones?”

“How?”

“We still have the one here, remember? You brought the first one you made for Yamaguchi to help match the floral arrangement. The stores are still open, so I can go buy some supplies and copy the design. I’ve made centerpieces before.”

“I can’t make you do that,” the woman protested, the wedding planner shaking his head despite her not being able to see it.

“It’s nothing, really. You’ve been such an easy bride, this will be the least of my worries. All I need you to do is text me the website you used to make them. Then, you should take a long bubble bath and ask your fiance to go pick up your mother. I’m sure he’ll be more than happy to give you a night to just focus on yourself.”

“He may have already offered.”

“This is exactly why you’re marrying the man. Smart choice.” Hearing a soft giggle from the other side of the phone, Suga felt his own lips quirk up. “See? You’ve just got to let other people help you. You’ve been so strong for so long, let us take care of this for you!”

“Okay, thank you. I’ll send the link now.”
“Great! Now go relax, and I’ll see you tomorrow bright and early.” With a quick goodbye, the fair haired man hung up the phone. Slumping back in his chair, Suga’s lungs released a sigh he hadn’t realized he was holding in.

“Did you just say you’re going to make twenty centerpieces tonight?” Forgetting that his assistant was still in the office, Suga flicked his gaze over to the questioning man before he nodded. “I’m pretty sure suicide is frowned upon in this type of work.”

“She was crying, Tooru.” The gravity of the sentence wasn’t lost on the brunet, his judgemental stare wavering to a look of genuine shock. “She’s been fighting so long on her own, I couldn’t let this ruin it for her. It’s up to us to make her wedding perfect. And if that means I have to make a miracle happen, I’ll have to hope the gods are in my favor tonight.”

“...You’re such a bleeding heart.” With an annoyance that Suga couldn’t find a reason for, Oikawa pushed off the couch before moving toward the window. It took the owner of the venue a second to realize that Oikawa had his phone out, pressing the device to rest between his cheek and his shoulder.

“Who are you calling?”

“Don’t question me.” Like a teenager Oikawa deflected Suga’s curiosity, the tailor turning away from his boss when speaking into the phone. “Yes, Cabella? Yup, it’s me. I’ve got to cancel tonight.”

“Tooru,” Suga started, though a wave from his assistant quieted his protest.

“Why? I’ve got to make centerpieces. Yes, I’m serious, what man would use that as a fake excuse to not get an easy lay? You aren’t the smartest bulb in the bunch, are you?” From where Suga sat, he could hear the loud yelling from the other side of the phone. Oikawa rolled his eyes at the colorful words that were thrown his way, though it didn’t seem he was taking any of them to heart. “Yes, yes, I’ve been called that before. Well, gotta go, see you later!”

“You didn’t have to cancel your date,” Suga said, watching Oikawa shrug while he swiped through his phone again.

“Not the end of the world,” The casual sway of Tooru’s voice at losing his potential sex buddy for the night was surprising to Suga, who blinked once to make sure the man wasn’t being sarcastic.
“Okay, where’s the real Oikawa and what did you do with him?”

“Are you saying I’m an alien?” Tapping his lower lip, the assistant seemed to think over the idea as he lifted the phone to his ear again. “Now that you mention it, I thought I felt a little different.”

“Now who are you calling?”

“Iwa-chan!” The happy tone that Oikawa cooed into the phone was super sweet, seeming to forget his previous date as he spoke to the police office. “What is my favorite bachelor doing on this steamy friday night?”

“Ah, there he is.” Reassured that his friend wasn’t a doppleganger, Suga watched as the tailor walked around his office and replied to the person on the other side of the phone.

“Wrapping up at work? Which means you’re with your partner, right?” It only took Suga a second to realize what his mischievous friend was planning, but the assistant was already speaking before he could protest.

“Well, when you two are done playing cops and robbers, come to the venue with dinner. You two just scored yourselves a double date with the hottest wedding planners in town.”

“What are you doing?!” Suga hissed out, Oikawa rolling his eyes before pulling the phone away and covering the microphone.

“I’m enlisting help, now do you want Thai or Italian?”

“I want you to tell them nevermind; we can’t make two groomsmen from one wedding help make centerpieces for another wedding. That’s got to be against a rule somewhere,” Suga protested, Oikawa’s glare matching the snap in his voice.

“Number one: I lost my chance at sex for the night. I’m getting compensated with Iwa-chan eye candy and linguini. Number two: The closest rule this breaks is Code Fuchsia.”
“I don’t know what that *means.*”

“You would if you had read the handbook.”

“Tooru.” But the assistant was quick to push his hand up, showing he didn’t want to talk anymore. Instead, Oikawa pulled the phone back to his ear, his smile alluring despite nobody but Suga being able to see it.

“So what do you two men in blue say? Pick up some Olive Garden for us and meet at Suga’s office in an hour? I’ll text you our orders.” The smile that crept over his face meant that Iwaizumi had replied in some positive way, though Suga was sure it wasn’t quite polite. “Oh I’ll pay you back to the very *best* of my abilities. See you soon, Iwa-chan.”

“You really are a piece of work,” Suga mumbled, watching Oikawa wink while he ended his phone call.

“You love me.” The playful smile that Oikawa gave made Suga shake his head, the wedding planner moving to grab his shoes and jacket.

“There’s a crafts store down the street that will have most of this stuff. They’re closed, but I know the owner and where the spare key is.”

“Perfect. It’s going to be hilarious to watch those two meat heads try to glue a line of pearls to embroidered lace.”

“Don’t be rude to them; they are helping us out instead of spending their Friday night enjoying themselves.”

“Hey, if Daichi-san takes his shirt off, then you’ll be enjoying yourself as well.”

“Tooru!” He knew he shouldn’t have told the man about his conversation with Daichi. Ever since the shower incident, Sugawara couldn’t shake the image of the officer naked from his mind. Feeling guilty, he had caved and asked Tooru for advice on how to deal with the man. And of course, the tailor was anything but helpful.
“Let’s go, pervert-kun!” Tooru practically skipped out of the room, a flamed face Suga slow to follow behind him.

This was going to be a long night.

~**~

“Now you’ve just got to glue the satin in the middle of the lace, and use two fingers to press the fabric into place.” Suga’s soft voice was tinged with sleep, though he tried not to let it show as he instructed the man sitting in front of him. Daichi’s brows were pressed together as he followed the instruction, Suga doing his best not to smile as the concentrated look. True to Oikawa’s prediction, the officer wasn’t the craftiest man on the planet. He tried, bless his heart, but seeing his fumble with the hot glue gun was enough to lift the wedding planner’s mood so late into the night.

The group had found a system for putting together the centerpieces. Sugawara was in charge of measuring out the pieces of lace and champagne-colored satin that went around the base of the candle. He was also in charge of making the dainty pearl pendant. Daichi, being the one who wasn’t given the gift of arts and crafts, had the simple task of gluing the three pieces together. Surprising everyone, Iwaizumi was agile with his fingers and knew his way around a heat gun. While Oikawa use his delicate handwriting to draw beautiful table numbers and the words ‘Carpe Diem’ on tissue paper, the cop would melt the designs onto the candles until only the glossy ink was left. Once dried, Oikawa would finish the project by gluing Daichi and Suga’s lacy fabric to the candle. So far the group had managed to finish fifteen tables, leaving only five to get the Little Crow’s approval.

“Hey, Iwa-chan?” Oikawa’s cheerful voice was bright even as the clock struck one, the tailor leaning closer when Iwaizumi only arched his eyebrow and skimmed the heat gun over the candle’s side again. “If I were a glue gun, I’d stick you and me together.”

“You keep telling me cheesy pickup lines, and I’m going to glue “Trashykawa” to your forehead.” Iwaizumi’s words made Oikawa pout, his whine loud as he shoved the palm of his hand into the officer’s shoulder. Despite his words, the slight quirk of Iwaizumi’s mouth proved that he wasn’t detesting the assistant’s company as much as he portrayed.

“One day, you’ll fall victim to my wicked flame.” As if to emphasise metaphor, Oikawa flicked the candle that Iwaizumi was labeling. Suga wasn’t trying to spy on their little flirt session, but it was hard not to feel his attention diverted. Oikawa had been known for his suave and flirtatious nature, especially when it came to people who he planned to sleep with. That meant that he had perfected the pick-up line, among other things. But tonight, his game was different. Though Suga didn’t doubt that Oikawa would jump at a chance to sleep with the bulky cop, something about their interaction didn’t feel so devious. Even as Iwaizumi rejected him with a smack to the side of the
head, the tailor’s laugh felt less strategic and more...real. Like he was enjoying interacting with the man instead of simply trying get in his pants.

“Ouch!” The sudden hiss from his side dragged Suga’s attention back to the mission at hand. Or rather, the cop who was now waving his hand and glaring down at the innocent glue gun in front of him.

“What happened?” He asked, hoping to keep his smile sympathetic at his struggling partner.

“I was trying to get the satin to stick in the middle of the damn lace-”

“And it moved right when you went to glue it?” Suga finished, watching the color in Daichi’s cheeks dip to red when he gave a weak nod. Holding his hand out, Suga curled his fingers once before glancing up to the frowning cop. “Give me the gun and I’ll show you a trick.”

“I’m not sure I’m meant for tasks that require meticulous attention.” Daichi admitted, turning the glue gun over to the man in front of him who laughed in reply.

“It’s easier when you’ve got a few tricks up your sleeve. Like this; instead of trying to glue each piece all the way down, just place a dot of glue to one side of the satin.” As he spoke, Suga performed the actions slowly, making sure to go at a pace to show his now focused student. “Then place that one spot onto the end of the lace like this. Put your thumb on the spot for about thirty seconds; just enough for the glue to grip the fabric solidly. Pressure is everything. Once it’s in place, tighten the satin to the other side of the lace, and then repeat the action. See?”

“That’s...way easier than what I’ve been doing.”

“Like I said, tricks are a wedding planner’s best friend.” Suga lifted his eyes from the fabric to Daichi, who shook his head slowly.

“Is that why you’re so good at this stuff? Just a bunch of smoke and mirrors?”

“Nope, I owe my skill to my mother.” Suga took the pendant he had been working on, rolling it in his palm to make sure the glue had cooled before he started to dribble the hot glue to the pendant’s bottom. “She was the best at things like this. If there was a torn seam or a missing bouquet, my mother would be able to whip something up in a matter of minutes. She was the queen of wedding
miracles. Now my father was just about as useful with a glue gun as you, so my mother forbid him from anything creative.”

“I don’t know whether to feel complimented or completely embarrassed,” Daichi replied, laughing when Suga’s eyes widened in obvious panic.

“Ah, I meant it in the nicest way!”

“It’s fine, I know I’m not Martha Stewart.”

“Really, I’m happy you’re here.” Suga’s honesty seemed to catch Daichi off guard, the wedding planner letting his smile lift with a shade of shyness, “Without you and Iwaizumi’s help, I’m not sure if I would have been able to pull this off. Even with Oikawa, we would have been up all night. I owe you.”

“I want to help you out whenever I can.” The look of genuine appreciation in Daichi’s eyes left Suga breathless, his fingers twitching around the pendant as the cop leaned a little closer. “You’re making Asahi and Noya’s dream wedding come true; this is the least I can do.”

“Is that why you came here tonight?” Suga’s quiet question made the wedding planner look down to the pendant in his fingers, distracting himself from the mental berating by pressing it onto the middle of the satin ribbon. He knew the question had slipped out because of his tired brain and relaxing inhibitions, but it didn’t make the inquisition feel any less stupid-

“No.” Daichi’s forehead pressed against his own after the officer’s answer, Suga feeling his heart leap into his throat from the spike in his heartbeat. Hazel eyes stared down at the pearls between them, his teeth biting his lower lip to hide his growing smile. “I wanted to see you.”

“Oh,” Suga whispered, the warmth in his stomach spreading through his body as he peered up to meet Daichi’s eyes. Their noses nearly brushed from their proximity, the wedding planner feeling Daichi’s hand slip over his own to rest on the settling pendent.

“For pressure,” Daichi excused quickly, Suga nodding their heads slightly before his cheeks bloomed in color. The flicker of warmth in Daichi’s gaze was lacking any judgment, seeming to enjoy how Suga began to unravel in front of him.
“Okay, that was super lame.” The blunt way that Oikawa’s voice cut through the moment made Suga jerk back, his eyes quick to flicker over the unannounced audience. Iwaizumi and Oikawa were both staring at the two, neither seeming ashamed of their obvious intrusion of privacy. Iwaizumi’s shrug jostled the fabric of Oikawa’s sleeve, their shoulders pressed together while leaning their backs on the bottom of the couch behind them.

“Sawamura’s known for shitty flirting skills.”

“Yes, but did you see how easily Suga-kun ate it up? He’s never fallen for my bad pick-up lines before!” The ‘tsk’ing noise that the assistant made was enough to humiliate Suga, who tried to switch the conversation.

“Why are you two slacking off?”

“We need the ribbon to finish the next centerpiece,” Iwaizumi explained, scratching his cheek and looking away from the pair. “I didn’t, uh, want to interrupt.”

“There was nothing to interrupt,” Daichi answered easily, though the assistant was quick to jump back into the conversation.

“Well duh, you’re like the king of bad pick-up lines.”

“Wow, you must really suck.” All eyes shot up to the doorway, a feline grin etched into Kuroo’s mouth as he leaned against the doorframe. Kenma was beside him, looking unfazed by the hodgepodge of people in the office while he played his video game. “You guys threw a party and didn’t even invite me?”

“It’s not a party; we were making last minute centerpieces. Iwaizumi and Daichi offered to come help us.” Suga’s words were followed up by Oikawa, who seemed more than eager to explain the situation to his partner in crime.

“Well, Iwai-chan was helping. Daichi-san was hitting on our precious Suga-kun, quite terribly I might add.”

“I-It wasn’t like that.” At Daichi’s defensive words, Kuroo sent a casual glance to the pair resting against the couch.
“What’s your take?” Kuroo asked Iwaizumi, who rolled his eyes before crossing his arms.

“Since I’ve got to work with Sawamura tomorrow, I’m going to have to plead the fifth. Last thing I need is him not covering my six because I ratted him out.”

“Ah, I see.” Kuroo’s wink was obvious to all in the room before he directed his conversation toward Daichi. “Not like you’d give away much; Oikawa only gives the title ‘king’ to the most deserving, after all. Nice work, stripper.”

“Tetsuro!” The wedding planner’s scolding tone only made the cheeky man shrug while giving his signature grin.

“You should be happy, boss man. Imagine the things he can do with his hips. You’ll be sure to tell me about it, yeah?”

“Oh my god,” Suga mumbled, pressing his face into Daichi’s shoulder to try and hide his mortification. Why did he hire such embarrassing people? The muscle under his forehead stiffened, and he only realized his mistake after the whole room fell into a chorus of whistles. The noise was enough to make Suga want to melt into the floor. And now he had dragged Daichi into the crazy fray of his employees. If the best man wasn’t already freaked out by Oikawa’s sexual teasing, Kuroo’s not-so-sneaky comments were sure to make him hightail it out of there.

“Alright, enough screwing around you guys.” So when a warm arm was pressed to his back, he was surprised.

“Suga’s exhausted and doesn’t need your teasing. So come help us with these centerpieces and let’s wrap this up.”

Daichi’s voice left little to argue with, reminding him of the times the man had answered his phone when on the job. Despite the firm tone, the arm remained comforting with enough lax for Suga to pull away. Instead the planner felt his shoulders relax into the hold, letting Daichi take over the room. He should have felt even more embarrassed at the touch reducing him to a smiling fool, which he was sure to hide into the strong shoulder of the cop. The feeling of Daichi’s steady hold made the wedding planner want to melt again, but this time it was for a completely different reason.
“Wow! Daichi-san’s kind of hot when he gets his cop voice on. Iwa-chan, can you do that, too? I wanna hear it!”

“Shut up, we’ve got candles to finish.” Iwaizumi seemed to respond to Daichi’s request without thought, though it was clearly from respect for his partner and not fear. He probably enjoyed the light hearted banter, but Daichi’s reasonable words reminded him of late it had gotten.

“No fun,” Oikawa huffed, pouting while he took the offered centerpiece to finish. Suga let out a quiet sigh at the sound of the two resuming work, feeling the warmth in his face starting to dissolve.

“You know, if you keep coming to Suga’s aid, he may think you like him.” At Kuroo’s comment Suga tilted his head, peeking from the corner of his eye to see the signature grin of the photographer. Golden eyes were focused on the cop on the floor, and if Suga didn’t know how lackadaisical Kuroo was, he would think the look held a predatory gleam. It stayed zoned in on Daichi’s face for only a second before the mostly quiet Kenma let out a sigh, instantly catching Kuroo’s attention.

“Should you really be the one to say that? You do the same for me.” After the insert of insight, the editor walked across the room to sit between the two groups. When Suga finally lifted his head, Kenma was pausing his game, the glue gun lifted into his free hand.

“But it’s not like I’m hiding anything from you; you know how much I love you.” It was said with such a carefree tone that it would have been impossible for Kenma to hide his blush. He still tried, tilting his head to cover the reddened cheeks with his shaggy haircut. The sight seemed to humor Kuroo, who let a deep chuckle roll through his chest before moving to help the group with the final centerpieces. Trying to ignore the inner voice of protest, Suga finally pulled away from the warmth of Daichi’s side to join into the group. His eyes only met Daichi’s for a second, though he hope he made his appreciation clear before focusing on instructing the two newcomers.

Having Kenma man the glue gun made the process a lot quicker, as he was used to creating stylized photo books for the wedding. Daichi was more than eager to help Kuroo start to move the finished centerpieces down to the grand ballroom, allowing the other four to make an efficient team of bedazzling machines. Within the hour the final centerpieces were being taken away by Kuroo, Suga letting out a relieved sigh. The fact that it was barely two in the morning was a blessing that he would have never thought possible. He took a glance around the room, knowing that there was still some clean-up to do before the little crow employees could call it a night.

But that was a task that could be put on pause.
“Oikawa, want to start cleaning up while I show our two helpers out?”

“No way! Iwa-chan’s going to spend the night with me. I’ve got to pay him back by giving him—” Before the flirty words could get out, Iwaizumi’s fingers were flicking the middle of the assistant’s forehead. The motion halted Oikawa’s voice, pretty brown eyes wide and blinking in confusion.

“I think I’ve had enough of your trash talk for one night.” Pushing up to his feet, Iwaizumi rotated his shoulder while walking toward the exit of Suga’s office. His smirk cocky, the officer sent a look over his shoulder pointed at the assistant. “Text me after you take a cold shower, hornball.”

“I’ll send you a text in the shower, then you’ll regret going home,” Oikawa grumbled, Iwaizumi giving a snort before he shoved himself from the room. If Suga noticed the way the assistant’s eyes lingered on the door, he didn’t voice it, instead following Daichi toward the doorway.

“I’ll be right back.” Suga watched Kenma give a half-interested nod before turning back to the game in his hands. Shaking his head with a smile, Suga and Daichi walked down the hallway together, the wedding planner shivering when feeling the brisk air of the night hit his skin. Iwaizumi was already heading toward the car, though Daichi paused on the stair’s top step to look back at the wedding planner.

“Sorry I couldn’t be more of a help—”

“Really, don’t apologize! I already feel like I owe you so much,” Suga rushed to answer, Daichi giving a hearty laugh while he waved his hand.

“It’s not like I had much planned tonight anyways. And now that I know that Iwaizumi can bedazzle like some teenage girl, I’ll never let him live it down.” Daichi’s smile looked just as handsome at two in the morning in the dark of night as it did every other time he had sent it Suga’s way. It was genuine, lacking the sultry or cocky connotations some of his employee's grins tended to have. It moved through Suga’s body like a breath of warm air, heating him despite how chilly it was outside. “Besides, I’m sure you’ll find someway to repay me without even realizing it. That’s just the kind of person you are.”

“I’m hoping that’s a good thing,” Suga said, giving his own smile when Daichi tried to hide his nervousness by glancing away.

“I should probably get going; Hajime’s aim is terrible when he’s tired.” Suga gave a soft nod at the
words, watching Daichi give a friendly shake of his hand before he turned and jogged down the stairs. The chilled wind pressed to his cheeks, yet Suga couldn’t find a reason to move back into the venue. Instead, his eyes stayed on the back of Daichi, wondering why the cop filled so much of his thoughts. Whenever he was around Daichi, the world felt a little bit better. He loved his job, but telling the dark-haired man about some of his favorite weddings over the phone after a tiring day only enhanced the feelings. He got butterflies when the best man touched his skin, and it always left him wanting Daichi to linger just a little longer. For the life of him, he couldn’t remember the last time someone made his heart swell with such overwhelming feelings. Instinctively his hands bunched up in the front of his shirt, knowing he couldn’t think about it any longer.

Daichi was a client, he couldn’t think of him like-

_Take a chance, let the cop sweep you off your feet. Maybe it’ll lead to nothing, but what if it does?_

Kuroo’s words dragged through his mind like a long forgotten song, and it only lingered there for a second before Suga’s feet were moving.

“Daichi!” The way he shouted the cop’s name must have worried him, because the taller man was quick to turn around when hitting the final step of the stairs.

“Suga? Are you okay?” Confusion was clear over the tan face, but Suga didn’t allow himself any room to think about what he was doing while he moved down the descending stairs.

“Turn back around, turn back around…” Even as he tried to talk himself out of it, Suga continued to move, only halting his fast pace when his feet stepped onto the stair resting just above Daichi’s. Not even giving the man time to ask his question again, Suga’s cold palms were pressed to Daichi’s cheeks, hazel eyes meeting a brown stare before the wedding planner took a deep breath. “This is probably a bad idea, but here I go!”

“What-” And then Suga was leaning forward, his fingers curling around the back of the officer’s jaw and his mouth pressing to Daichi’s. The warmth of the other man’s lips was quick to chase away any of the cold of the night, Suga’s mind drowning in the rich taste of Daichi. He was in complete control of the action, enjoying the feeling of cradling his counterpart’s strong jaw and smoothing his thumbs into the rounded cheekbones. Heat was pooling underneath Daichi’s skin, and Suga wanted to possess it with his soft grasp. Yet with every second the kiss continued, it felt like the officer was the one stealing the strength from Suga’s professional boundaries.

The slight height advantage of the elevated stair meant that he was leaning his weight into Daichi’s chest. He let out a sigh of contentment into the other man’s mouth when familiar hands reached out
to steady his waist. The strength of the palms caging his hips while he allowed Suga to kiss him was a power trip that Sugawara never expected would affect him so strongly. If Daichi wanted to, he could push the wedding planner away. He could also crush him into his chest and force his own will into the soft meeting of their mouths. Instead, the cop remained pliant for Suga’s exploration while protectively holding his slim waist to assure the man wouldn’t fall. His lips were receptive without controlling, which made Suga’s spine shiver when the fair haired man finally pulled back from the kiss.

“Ah…” Suga let his words slip away when Daichi’s eyes opened, the wedding planner patiently waiting for Daichi’s gaze to focus again before he smiled. “Just wanted to say thank you again.”

“N-No problem.” Daichi coughed after the crack in his voice, Suga pressing the back of his hand to his lips to hide his smile when Daichi struggled to take a step backwards. “I should...the car...Hajime’s….”

“You should go,” Suga supplied, his spirits lifting at how affected the cop was from his actions. It smothered his own nerves, though his fingers were nervously twining behind his back while Daichi spoke.

“Let me know how the bride likes her centerpieces.” Suga gave a nod, unsure if speaking again would just make the situation awkward. But the fact that Daichi wanted Suga to call him tomorrow meant that the kiss wasn’t bad, right? From how hard his heart was beating, he didn’t want to think the decision was a mistake. Daichi continued to send looks over his shoulder at Suga when he ventured back to his car. Iwaizumi was quick to punch Daichi’s arm with a comment that the wedding planner couldn’t hear. Once sure that Daichi could no longer see him from how far the car had pulled down the driveway, Suga pressed his fingers to his lower lip and smiled. He twirled back toward the venue, nearly tripping over the first step when a loud round of applause echoed in the night air.

“Not bad, Romeo.” Looking up at the balcony that he spent many nights enjoying, Suga wasn’t nearly as surprised as he should have been to see his three employees watching him. Kuroo’s grin was full of pride that Suga wasn’t sure the man deserved to wear, while Oikawa’s annoyed expression and crinkled nose showed he didn’t appreciate the romance as much as Kuroo.

“I swear, if you two sleep together before I get in Iwa-chan’s pants, I’m going to protest this wedding.”

“Suga-san and Daichi-san have been flirting longer than you and Iwazumi-san.” Kenma’s eyes didn’t lift from the console in his hand, the shivering man pressing close to the much warmer photographer’s body.
“What’s next, Yams getting deflowered by Catus-shima?! I’m protesting. *Protesting* I say!”

Throwing his arms up in dramatic fashion, Tooru stomped back into the venue, his loud cries of ‘protesting’ muffled as he got deeper into the building.

“Too cold,” Kenma complained, quick to duck under Kuroo’s arm and scurry back into the warmth Suga was also longing for. He sighed while he started to move up the stairs, though his eyes watched while Kuroo leaned his crossed arms onto the balcony railing.

“So you changed your mind about my advice?”

“No clue what you’re talking about,” Suga deflected, Kuroo snickering despite the shutdown.

“One day you’ll be thankful you met me.” Pausing in his walk, Suga gave the man a smile that was fueled by the emotions still churning through his heart.

“I’m thankful for each day I get to work with you and everyone else.”

“Even Tooru?” Kuroo teased, Suga laughing despite how the cold air made his lungs ache.

“Even him; you’re my precious family. I love you all very much.” The obvious truth in the wedding planner’s words seemed to surprise the man, his eyes widening for a moment before swaying back to their droopy slant.

“Right back at you, boss man. Now get inside before you keel over and I have to take over this ship.”

“Tooru might give you a run for your money,” was Suga’s reply, Kuroo shrugging.

“Without you, it might as well be called ‘Titanic’. Who runs it into its watery grave just changes how fast it gets there.”

“Remind me never to go on vacation.”
“Only for your honeymoon.” The mischievous wink that Kuroo gave before retreating into the building was all Suga needed to see to guess who he was implying. Ducking his head, Suga hoped the chilly air would excuse the rosy tint to his face when re-entering the venue.

The heat that hit him when opening the door was refreshing, and the slow breath he took no longer was tinged by a frosty bite. But the different location didn’t change the tingle that was still affecting his lips, his mind flashing back to the stunned look of Daichi. Seeing the expression made him feel like he made the right move, though his mind was quick to cast doubt. What if he had read the situation wrong? Could Daichi have been flustered because he didn’t know how to turn Suga down? Was this whole thing just an unfortunate case of misreading signals? Suga knew ruminating on it wouldn’t change what he did; only time would tell if he had made the right choice.

For now, all the wedding planner could do was wait.

Chapter End Notes

Tada! How much are you all smiling right now? So Suga and Daichi have finally kissed, but what will come out of this? Will other couples follow their lead? Or will other problems get in the way? Let me know what you thought of the chapter, and kudos are always welcome!

Next Chapter: The Meaning of Us
The Meaning of Us

Chapter Summary

Kenma's status, Tsukishima's intentions, and Hinata's feelings are all called into question.

Chapter Notes

Wah you guys are simply the best fans ever! Thank you all for reading this story, I love hearing what you all think of the story. =) So, on to the next chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Kenma felt weird having a friend other than Kuroo on his couch. Despite being in the middle of the super smash battle, Kenma gave a side glance to the orange hair that was now jerking with each pound of the remote.

“Jump, you big ape! Donkey Kong smash!” Hinata’s loud yell did not match the moves that his player was making, showing this wasn’t a game the teacher played often.

“Please be quieter, Kuroo is in the other room,” Kenma requested, pressing a set of buttons in order to hit a tilt up kick. Watching the furry animal fly into the air was somewhat satisfying for the editor, though he kept it inside as he quietly initiated another melee of hits. In seconds a well placed up-smash had Donkey Kong slamming into the screen, making Hinata’s fourth life disappear from the bar in the corner. All five of Kenma’s lives were still bright on the bottom of the screen, showing his skill with the cloaked woman.

“No way! I totally had you this time.” Hinata’s groan was muffled into the pillow on the couch, Kenma brushing his hair behind his ear as he shrugged.

“Your damage was too high.”

“This game is unfair. If a giant monkey throws a weak princess off a cliff, she should be crushed!”

“So if I throw a shrimp off my spot on the couch, will the result be the same?” Both short men
peeked behind them to see Kuroo’s lazy grin, the man pressing his large hand onto Hinata’s head to ruffle the unruly hair.

“Kuroo,” Kenma condoned, the photographer’s eyes showing pure mischief when looking at his roommate.

“Don’t worry, I’m not staying to reclaim my position as your best friend.”

“You’re leaving?” Kenma was surprised at the nod from Kuroo, who finally released the annoyed teacher’s head to move into the kitchen. Even as the game started the next round, Kenma couldn’t say his full attention was on Hinata’s charging character.

“Yup, Bokuto and Akaashi are meeting me downtown for a drink. I guess birdhead’s got some girl from his job he wants me to meet.”

“Ah.” Trying to drop the conversation, the editor turned back to the screen to barely block the monkey’s offensive attack. Despite the close call, it felt harder for Kenma to type in his memorized moved as his mind drifted back to the conversation Kuroo had started. “We know her?”

“Nope, some new girl. Bokuto says she’s into motorcycles and messy hair, which apparently means we’re the perfect match.”

“You own a bike? Iwaizumi rides one too—yes!!” Hinata’s loud cheer after finally knocking Sheik off the screen was instant, the short man tossing his hands into the air. Kenma’s irritation felt out of place for the loss, never getting upset when his friend got a lucky shot. But pairing it with Kuroo’s reply seemed to damper his mood. Not sure how to represent this, Kenma kept quiet, focusing on hammering away at his opponent’s health percentage.

“I’ve never really liked driving in cars, but I’ve got to be able to get to location shootings. I made a compromise.”

“Do you bring Kenma on it?”

“You, he’s even got his own helmet.” Kuroo’s voice was filled with pride as he moved over to the front door, sliding on his shoes before lifting his head back to the quiet blond. “Do you want me to bring you something home for dinner? We’re going to that restaurant with the killer macaroni and
“cheese.”

“Yes please,” Kenma answered, though didn’t let his eyes move from the screen in front of him. He fought back a flinch when a warm hand pressed to the top of his head, gently petting down his silky hair.

“Don’t get too lonely without me, kitten.” Then with a short goodbye to Hinata, Kuroo was out of the apartment, the door closing quietly behind him. Kenma took a slow breath after the man disappeared, not sure why he had been holding it. Trying to ignore his muddled feelings, Kenma watched Sheik evade one of Donkey Kong’s fists by jumping to a broken piece of Hyrule Temple, surprised when the character didn’t give chase. Looking over to Hinata, the editor was met with a concerned gaze from his friend, making Kenma blink before lowering his controller.

“What?”

“Are you okay?” The question wasn’t what the blond was expecting, and Hinata took the initiative to continue. “I mean, with Kuroo going on a date and all.”

“He didn’t call it that,” Kenma answered, Shouyou shrugging before he leaned back on the couch.

“Wasn’t it implied? I mean, that Bokuto guy said they were a good match up or something. If they hit it off, Kuroo would probably go out with her again.”

“Isn’t that a good thing?”

“Not if he’s the one who makes your heart go all ‘whoosh.’” Hinata’s blunt response was enough to make Kenma blush, his bright cheeks seeming to make the teacher second guess his statement. “Wasn’t it Kuroo who you were talking about before?”

“I don’t know.”

“If he was, then you shouldn’t have let him go out with that girl. You could have said something, and Kuroo would have listened.”
“It’s not my place,” Kenma answered instantly, disliking the way his heart squeezed in his chest. He tried to keep his unpleasant feeling from showing as he anxiously rotated the control stick with his thumb. “I don’t know if this woman is good a match for Kuroo or not.”

“But you like him! It doesn’t matter if you know her or not; you don’t want to see him dating someone else, right?” The question made Kenma squirm in his seat, unsure of why he couldn’t deny Shouyou’s claim. Kuroo was his best friend, yes, but that was different than liking him. The implication the teacher was making should have made Kenma uncomfortable. And it did, just not in the way that he had thought it would. Instead, his stomach cramped and a queasy ache gurgled in his stomach when imagining Kuroo finding solace in another person. All the time, Kuroo suggested that Kenma was trying to replace him. But what if the opposite happened?

“Maybe.” The ambivalent answer didn’t seem to satisfy Hinata, but Kenma was quick to continue by changing the subject. “You want to play the storyline this time? I’ll let you be player one.”

“Really? I’ve never made it through the whole thing before!” The excitement that glowed in Hinata’s face was enough to assure Kenma that the previous conversation was no longer relevant. Still, even as he listened to his friend chatter while he picked from the menu, Kenma couldn’t shake the sickening feeling still pooling in the deep part of his stomach.

~**~

If Tsukishima had to pick one word to describe his current mood, livid seemed the most appropriate. Normally Fridays were the days in which the lawyer felt a sense of relief at the work week being over. Though he tended to do work on Saturdays, he enjoyed the solace of his home. There were no annoying co-workers to cut down to size, and he had the option of sleeping in if he felt inclined to. This particular Friday had been filled with more clients than normal, as he had taken an early day the previous week for the tux adjustments. The middle of the day was a grind to get to, and even the schooled lawyer felt a little anxious to finish the day off quickly.

But just as he ended his session with his last client of the day, the blond’s secretary had informed him that he had a message waiting in his office.

"Since you’ve yet to reach out to your fiancee in regards to your friend’s wedding, I took the liberty of contacting the family on your behalf. Kiyoko-san is free for July 8th and her father has agreed to have her accompany you. I expect you to treat her as the proper man you have been taught to be and escort your fiance accordingly. We’ll talk soon."

He wasn’t sure why thirty minutes after receiving the message the lawyer was driving his BMW
down the windy road of 'Little Crows.' It had simply been the first address that he had popped into his gps while slamming his office door. Now, as he moved from the front seat of his car to take in the venue, the lawyer wondered why the semi-familiar scenery made the ache in the top of his spine start to dissipate.

“Yo, Tsukki!” An automatic twitch pulled at the lawyer's eye, his golden glare lifting up toward the source of the annoying nickname.

“Don’t call me that, Kuroo-san.” The photographer seemed quite content to lay his arms over the balcony of the venue, his grin wide despite the firm tone in Tsukishima’s voice.

“To what do we owe the pleasure of seeing you here so late in the evening?”

“Please fall,” was Tsukishima’s reply, the photographer giving a low whistle before casually running one tan hand through his messy hair.

“Sounds like someone needs a little pick-me-up. Yams is in his greenhouse; let our little sunflower put a smile on that grumpy face.”

“Go away.” Tsukishima let his feet walk toward a familiar greenhouse behind the main building, strategically ignoring the obnoxious laughter from the annoying brunet. The sun was close to gone, low enough for the lights in the glass building to turn on. The glow made it easy to see through the greenhouse, a small silhouette being the only movement inside. Quietly the lawyer stepped through the open door, pushing his glasses up his nose to observe the humming florist pointing his pencil at one of the rows of flowers in front of him.

“Row twenty three’s carnations are blooming well, and look like they’ll be ready for next week’s wedding. Now the roses…” Yamaguchi’s words trailed off as he turned, brown eyes rounding in surprise when seeming to finally realize he had a visitor. It was almost comical when the freckled man jumped, fumbling to keep his clipboard from dropping from his hands.

“Do you always talk to yourself?” He couldn’t resist the teasing remark, especially when Yamaguchi’s cheeks darkened to match the red flowers he had previously been counting. Finally composing himself, Yamaguchi tapped his pencil against the clipboard and cleared his throat.

“Ah, good evening! What are you doing here?” The question seemed to be the theme of the night, though he had yet come up with a plausible answer. It made his eyebrows furrow, the lawyer
giving a slow glance to the greenhouse around them. The huge glass structure looked much wider inside, allowing the florist to keep hundreds of flowers with no fear of weather deterioration. Slowly walking down the row that the florist was currently occupying, Tsukishima kept his eyes on the greenery while he spoke.

“I need a bouquet that says ‘fuck you’.”

“Wh-what?” He didn’t need to look up to tell the request was not what Yamaguchi had expected, the blond shrugging before running his slender fingers against the petals of the purple flower in front of him.

“I’ll pay you, of course. Money’s not an issue, though I would like them before I leave.” Finally turning his sharp eyes to the man, Tsukishima kept his face serious to show the request wasn’t his attempt at being funny. “Can you do it?”

“Ah, well…” Yamaguchi’s adam’s apple bobbed as he swallowed, nervous eyes flickering around the greenhouse before he gave a quiet nod. “Just a moment.”

“I’ve got time.” Then the lawyer fell silent, keeping his attention on the man now weaving through the rows of flowers. A brown cowlick swayed with Yamaguchi’s movements, his fingers quick to pick out flowers from different rows. It was impressive to see how fast the florist moved, seeming to memorize where each specific flower was grown in the massive greenhouse. Even if given a picture of the desired plant, Tsukishima wasn’t sure he would be able to work as efficiently as the man now hesitantly returning in front of him. “You finished?”

“I believe so,” Yamaguchi answered, his fingers arranging the bundle in his hands as he spoke. “I’ll need to clean up the bottoms and get some paper from my workshop to wrap them, if you’d like them finished tonight.”

“Care to tell me what I’m buying?”

“Oh, right!” Blushing as pink as the first flower he lifted, Yamaguchi twirled the funnel shaped plant as he spoke. “The petunia is representative of resentment and anger, despite their popularity in normal gardens. By pairing it with these yellow carnations, which are the flower representation of rejection and disdain, this bouquet takes on quite a negative connotation. Finally, these small orange bundles are called butterfly weed. Though quite beautiful in their color, the reason I didn’t suggest them for Noya and Asahi’s wedding is because their meaning is literally ‘leave me alone’.”
“Quite a statement.” Tsukishima surmised, Yamaguchi’s smile wide as he nodded.

“Yes! So you see, if I scatter some of these into the arrangement, you’ll have your...your ‘fuck you’ bouquet.” The tips of the florist’s ears were pink after his comment, and the lawyer felt a smirk twitch at the side of his mouth. It was obvious that the man wasn’t the swearing type. Yet somehow, hearing such rough words from the soft man pleased the blonde.

“I’ll buy it.” Yamaguchi gave a quick nod, moving the flowers to a bench and gently placing them against the wood.

“Just let me finish the inventory on this row and I’ll have them wrapped up for you, okay?”

“That’s fine.” From the business point of view, Tsukishima understood the need to finish one objective before jumping into another one. He had come unannounced and asked the man for a favor while he was trying to finish his duties for the night; he could spare a few minutes to allow the florist to finish his task. He wasn’t that much of an ass. Turning his gaze back toward the collection of flowers that Yamaguchi had put together for him, a question formed in the lawyer's head. “I do have to ask; why would you keep flowers with such negative meanings in a wedding venue?”

“Many people don’t know the true meaning behind flowers, though I warn them if they make a selection such as your own. If you have a mix of positive and negative flowers, sometimes the flowers can take on different meanings.”

“Such as?” The curiosity from the blonde seemed to excite the florist, who didn’t hesitate to point to a flower toward the end of the row.

“You see that white flower that kind of resembles a carnation? It’s called a Begonia. Their meaning is ‘deep thinking’, which paired with the yellow carnation could mean that the person deeply hates the situation or person they are thinking of. However, when paired with something like the red rose, the deep thinking is thoughts of love, not hatred. And when alone, it gives off the meaning of intelligence and adaptability. That’s my Suga-san flower.”

“You’ve picked out flowers for your co-workers?”

“Ah, not on purpose!” Yamaguchi’s lip was tugged between his teeth after his admission, showing
his embarrassment. “It just...happened, I guess.”

“Please tell me you picked the one that equates to ‘pain in the ass’ for Kuroo-san.” Tsukishima’s dry answer had Yamaguchi laughing, his earlier modesty dissolving as he shook his head.

“Kuroo-san isn’t all bad. Here, I’ll show you.” A warm hand was around his wrist before Tsukishima could protest, the eager florist pulling him deeper into the greenhouse as he scanned the rows. “I know I still have a few left over here-ah! This one.”

“It looks stupid.” Not bothering to hold back his honest opinion, the blond scrunched his face at the dark flower that he was staring at. It looked almost black, though the gleam of light proved the purple tint to the long petals in front of him.

“This is the Cattleya orchid. It’s known for it’s exotic beauty, and it represents a mature charm to those who know it’s true meaning. Whenever I see it, I think of Kuroo-san.” The fond way Yamaguchi spoke of the flower mirrored the soft expression of the florist’s face, Tsukishima quietly watching the man beside him. Why did Yamaguchi get so sentimental over plants? They were just flowers, not human beings. They couldn’t hold conversation or even retain memory of the time and effort the freckled man put into nurturing them. And yet Yamaguchi treated them with such care that Tsukishima couldn’t force himself to berate his wasted sentiment.

“I can only imagine what ridiculous flower you’d choose for Oikawa-san.” Instead, the lawyer gave the florist an opportunity to divulge deeper into his personal happiness. Yamaguchi was more than willing to show the teal bundle he called Hydrangeas, which represented a boastful vanity as well graceful beauty that Tsukishima had to admit reflected Oikawa quite well. He struggled to admit that the purple tulip, reflecting solitary elegance, could relate to the snotty baker Kageyama. Kenma’s relationship to Kuroo seemed to reflect in the yellow Alstroemeria, Tsukishima agreeing with Yamaguchi’s definition “devotion to friendship”.

Yamaguchi also educated the lawyer on some of the colors of each flower, like how sending a yellow rose and red rose gave two completely different implications. Things that Tsukishima would never bother to think about were second nature to Yamaguchi, who seemed more than willing to share his knowledge with the quiet lawyer. Some flowers had historical stories, while others were woven into mythology of different cultures. Even as the sun completely disappeared from the sky, implying that Tsukishima had been in the greenhouse far longer than he had intended, he couldn’t voice his complaint of time wasted. Each time the words started to form on his lips, Yamaguchi’s face would light up at spotting a flower he had yet to explain to his companion.

“And so then when Aphrodite started to cry over Adonis dying, the tears were said to create the Anemone flower.”
“Yamaguchi.” At the call of his name, Yamaguchi paused in his story, lifting his head from the tiny purple flower which he had previously been talking about.

“Yes?”

“Is there a particular flower you’d represent yourself with?”

“Oh, I’ve...never really thought about it.” Yamaguchi’s answer wasn’t surprising to the lawyer; the florist was so focused on the positive qualities of the people around him, he’d never be able to truly think of himself for long. It was no wonder the man had no self confidence when it came to himself. Yamaguchi’s eyes swept the ground in humility before he casually threw out a comment to diffuse the sudden silence. “But I’ve thought of one for you.”

“Me?” Golden eyes narrowing on the man nodding in front of him, Tsukishima crossed his arms over his chest as he scoffed. “Might as well show me, then.”

“It’s over here.” Again Yamaguchi grabbed his wrist, though the taller man didn’t voice a complaint at the touch. Instead, he remained silent as Yamaguchi pulled them in front of a flower that Tsukishima had never encountered before. Slender and tall, the bright yellow flowers grew in a vertical line up the sturdy stem of the plant. The funnel of the flower was familiar to the petunia and daffodile, though neither grouped so efficiently as the flower in front of him.

“What is it?”

“They’re called gladiolus,” Yamaguchi answered, the familiar fondness he had used earlier returning to his tone as he stepped closer to Tsukishima. “Sometimes they’re known as ‘sword lilies’ because of their unique growing pattern. But they’ve also garnered that name because of their meaning in the florist culture. Gladiolus are representative of strength and moral integrity. And...well, I guess that kind of reminds me of you.”

“What, you run out of flowers that meant ‘cocky’ or ‘rude’?” Tsukishima asked, Yamaguchi’s smile weak as he reached out to run his fingers over the bright petals in front of him.

“I used to think you were like that the first time I met you. But the more time I spend with you, the more I get to see the person underneath the lawyer persona.”
“Most agree there’s nothing redeeming about my ‘true’ personality.” Brown eyes sparkled with genuine honesty as they flickered up to Tsukishima, the florist seeming to hesitate with his words before continuing.

“You’re not a bad person, though. I enjoy spending time with you, Tsukki.” Yamaguchi’s face scrunched after his comment, the man shaking his head quickly. “Ah, sorry! I know you don’t like when people call you that-”

“Don’t worry about it.” At the confused look that Yamaguchi gave him, Tsukishima gave a slow shrug. “I expect weird nicknames from you, flower king.”

“T-Tsukki!” The bright color to Yamaguchi’s face made Tsukishima smirk, enjoying how flushed his counterpart was. He would never say the embarrassing name in front of another living soul, yet having something like this to hang over Yamaguchi’s head was enough to satisfy his sadistic side. Before he could continue his teasing, a sudden splash of cold water hit into his face, instantly removing any sign of amusement. His eyes darted over to his right, barely catching sight of the small sprinkler at his side before his glasses were doused with another shot of water.

“What the fuc-”

“It’s eight already?!” Yamaguchi’s cry of shock drew Tsukishima’s attention back to the florist, the blob of brunet reflecting in the water on his lenses. Growling as he snatched his glasses from his face to wipe them clean, the florist continued with his quick explanation. “The sprinklers always turn on at 8pm, since I’m normally out of here by now. I just got distracted and I was having so much fun-I’m sorry, Tsukki!”

“Stop apologizing; we need to move.” Taking the initiative after he could see again, Tsukishima snatched the man’s soaking hand to drag him through the greenhouse. Sprinklers were raining water down on them as they ran, the lawyer keeping his free hand perched on his forehead to keep his glasses from getting splashed again. By the time the two finally made it to the corner of the greenhouse and away from the spray of the sprinklers, both were dripping wet. The suit that was worth a pretty penny was heavy from the water, his shoes squishing each time he shifted in them. Yamaguchi was pressed into the corner of the greenhouse, Tsukishima leaning next to him while both men tried to catch their breath from their previous running.

“They should shut off in a minute or so.”
“Fantastic.” The sarcasm that dripped from Tsukishima’s voice was almost as evident as the line of water now trailing down the side of his cheek.

“Should I apologize again?” Yamaguchi peeked up through his shaggy hair which was now plastered against his cheeks, a hint of a smile threatening to spread when Tsukishima glared down at him.

“Don’t make me drown you with the water in my pocket.” The intimidating tone seemed to have the opposite effect on the florist, who burst into giggles as soon as the words were out. The shorter man tried to quell his laughter as he stepped in front of Tsukishima and lifted his free hand, wiping some remaining water off Tsukishima’s lenses.

“Sorry, Tsukki.” Yet the lack of sympathy in his voice was quite evident to both, Yamaguchi starting to laugh again when the lawyer rolled his eyes and reached over to flick the brunette’s cowlick.

“Even now, this thing refuses to stay down.”

“Ah, I guess. But…” Yamaguchi let his fingers linger against Tsukishima’s temple, the warm palm resting gently on the curve of the blonde’s cheekbone. “Someone once said it looked good on me.”

“It does.” The words slipped out without warning, making Yamaguchi’s eyes widen. The hand now snugly pressed into Tsukishima’s tensed, the lawyer schooling his features to try and ignore the skipped heartbeat in his chest. “Though the original statement was that your looks suit your occupation.”

“R-Right.” Neither spoke after that, though the sudden lack of background noise signaled to Tsukishima that the sprinklers had finished their job.

“You should finish my bouquet before I’m given another unwanted shower by your ill-timed sprinklers.” The comment seemed to snap Yamaguchi into action. The florist yanked his hands away from the lawyer and nodded with enough force to snap his neck.

“I’ll be right back!” And off the man went, using the familiar speed he had displayed during their last encounter. The lapse of Yamaguchi brought attention to just how uncomfortable the wet clothing was against his skin, making Tsukishima grimace in annoyance. Why hadn’t he yelled at Yamaguchi for not remembering when the sprinklers would come on? Normally, the blunder
would get a tongue lashing from the blonde before he made the responsible party agree to pay for the dry cleaning. If he was in a particularly bad mood, as he had been, he wouldn’t be satisfied until the other person was groveling at his feet or crying. Yet none of that had happened, mainly because Tsukishima hadn’t gotten mad. And though he hated to admit it, it didn’t take a brainiac to realize why. The flash of the florist’s laughing face and shy touch made Tsukishima’s stomach cramp, his skin warming with an unwanted hint of a blush.

Yamaguchi Tadashi was more dangerous than Tsukishima had originally thought.

~**~

Hinata knew that he shouldn’t be humming so happily over something that Daichi had forced him to do. Wednesday used to be the day he would work on his arms at the gym, or go to the buffet with Noya and Tanaka. Sometimes both if the mechanics didn’t have a lot of cars in the shop. But since the lava cake incident, Hinata hadn’t really minded the shift in his schedule. At first it had been a pain, but it had been a month since the catastrophe and Hinata was getting used to his new obligation.

It had nothing to do with wanting to spend time with Kageyama. Or, he hadn’t thought it did. Nine times out of ten, the man was aggravated at the way Hinata breathed, nevermind when he talked. They bickered like an old married couple. The thought made the teacher nearly trip down the long stairs to the basement, cheeks rising in color as his mind drifted back to the conversation he had the night before.

“So you decided to go there every week because of a piece of cake and a pat on the head?” Yachi’s disbelieving tone made Hinata scowl, his phone wedged between his shoulder and ear while he flipped the grilled cheese in his pan. His hectic schedule at the school with the final quarter approaching made it hard for him to see his best friend, though they made sure to call each other once a week for updates on each other’s lives. Hinata had just finished explaining the weird interaction with Kageyama at the wedding, still unsure why he had decided to increase their time spent together.

“Yachi, it’s not just any cake. Kageyama makes the best cake, and I would know; I’ve tasted almost every type of cake in the state! This stuff literally melts in your mouth and then explodes in pure amazing taste. It’s the cake’s fault!”

“Or, here’s a thought; is it possible that you like the cake because it’s Kageyama making it? The guy you’ve already openly said is very attractive-”
“I said his eyes were eccentric looking,” Hinata argued, the sigh in the phone making the teacher visualize his friend rolling her eyes.

“Could this just be another indication that you just like Kageyama?”

“I like the cake, Yachi, the cake!”

“Can’t you like both?” Hinata’s mouth opened to answer the question only to realize he didn’t have a response. His nose twitched at the smell of burning food, Hinata mentally swearing as he rushed to flip the sandwich over. Though part of the bread was charred and looked unappealing, it wasn’t enough to deem the meal a lost cause. Staring down at the cooking grilled cheese, his mind went over Yachi’s question.

“I don’t know...I mean, I like Kageyama as a friend, even when he picks on me and calls me names. But sometimes he’s really cool and I...this is all really weird to think about,” Hinata admitted, his voice low as if uneasy voicing his thoughts.

“You’re overthinking this because he’s a guy.” Yachi’s words of wisdom seemed to make sense to the troubled teacher, who remained quiet when the blonde continued. “Why don’t you just try to see how your heart feels next time you hang out? You’ve never been the type to think things through logically; you’re always going on instinct. So just let that side of you take over, and see where it leads you. And who knows, maybe you’ll be able to pick up on what Kageyama is feeling about you, too.”

“Why do I feel like you just insulted me?” Hinata was answered with a laugh from his friend, making him pout before continuing. “But alright, if you really think it’ll work...”

“Trust me; it will.”

“Kageyama!” Hinata’s loud call of the baker’s name echoed in the large room. Instantly Kageyama flinched, turning his head to glare at the man now jogging across his kitchen.

“Idiot, not so loud-”

“Are those cupcakes?!” The excitement and hunger that swirled in Hinata’s stomach was instant at the delicious scene in front of him. In rows of multiple colors, the mix of vanilla and chocolate
cupcakes were enough to make the teacher’s mouth water. His attention drifted up the large table, fascinated by the bright colored frostings already decorating the first three rows. It only took him a second to realize the pattern of colors. “Rainbow cupcakes?”

“They’re for an engagement party; the brides paid extra for these to be presented at the party,” Kageyama explained, his blue eyes dropping back down to the bare cupcake in front of him. Hinata watched in awe as Kageyama easily piped the green frosting on the cupcake, the perfect swirl only adding appeal to the pleasantly aromatic dessert. Kageyama then pinched a few rainbow sprinkles onto the top of the icing, completing the look to start the green arch of the rainbow design.

“That looks so cool! Teach me how to do that-”

“No way.”

“Aw, don’t be like that,” Hinata whined, scooting over to the baker to gently tug on his sleeve. “I’m supposed to be helping out, not just watching you do everything. I bet if you taught me how to do that, we could bang these cupcakes out in half the time.”

“Like I’m going to let you touch something the customers are going to see,” Kageyama snapped, the two men glaring at each other. Hinata gave another tug to the sleeve on the baker’s arm, his other hand waving around as he spoke.

“You let me work on the wedding cake last time, and I didn’t mess it up! Just let me try a few and then I won’t ask again.”

“...Fine.” The growl under Kageyama’s tone didn’t deter Hinata’s smile, the grumpy baker walking over to the counter and pointing toward a couple cupcakes separated from the rest. “These are the duds of the batch. You can practice on them, and if you don’t completely suck, then I’ll let you help.”

“Alright!” Eager to prove Kageyama wrong, Hinata vibrated in his spot while the man quickly put together a second piping bag, testing the end with a few practice squeezes before he handed the bag to the shorter man. Hinata stared down at the baking instrument for a few seconds before he looked back to Kageyama, blinking once. “How do I hold it?”

“How do you-” Steam practically billowed from Kageyama’s ears as he smacked his forehead,
muttering a few things the teacher couldn’t catch before dropping his hand and glaring at Hinata. “Twist the top of the bag until all of the frosting is at the bottom of the piping bag. Then you rest that twisted part between your thumb and palm and add pressure to direct how much icing comes out of the bag. Got it?”

“Uh, yes!” Hinata gave a thumbs up to the baker, who rolled his eyes before he turned back to his cupcakes. Waiting until he was no longer being watched, Hinata dropped his gaze to the frosting filled bag in his hands. Scrunching his nose in concentration, the orange haired man twisted the top of the bag and yelped when a glob of white instantly shot out of the end of the bag. The other end was also dripping with icing, though the pointed tip kept the flow to a much smaller amount. To say he had made a mess would be an understatement. Lost as to what he had done wrong, the teacher jumped when seeing a tall shadow loom over his still bare cupcakes. Hesitating before looking over his shoulder, Hinata winced at the glare he was receiving.

“How did you mess up already?”

“I did what you said!” Hinata fought back, dropping the messy bag to the counter and pointing at the twisted part. “I was twisting it, and all of it just fell out of the bottom.”

“You have to push the frosting down before you twist it, idiot.”

“Well you didn’t say that.”

“I-” Kageyama paused in his reply, the baker closing his mouth as he stared down at his partner. The silent stare had Hinata’s hair on edge, the teacher leaning closer to the counter despite trying to meet the look with his own. After a long moment of silence Kageyama sighed. “Right, you’ve never done this before.”

“Well yeah. I mean I love sweets, but I don’t make em,” Hinata defended, the black haired man giving a slow nod.

“Go wash your hands off and come over to my station.” The calm way Kageyama instructed Hinata was different, leaving the teacher stunned at the show of understanding. Slowly Hinata did as he was told, making sure to dry his hand from any of the sticky icing before moving back to the center table. Kageyama had refilled his piping bag with the green frosting, glancing toward Hinata to make sure the teacher was watching before he spoke. “Stand in front of me.”
“Why?”

“Just do it.”

“Fine fine,” Hinata grumbled, shuffling himself to stand in front of the cupcakes Kageyama had previously been frosting. His attention was distracted by the delicious looking treats, though all thoughts of sweets went diving out the window when a hard chest was pressed into Hinata’s back. Arms that Hinata had only admired a few times were now moving around him, freezing the panicking man despite the calm voice entering his ear.

“See where my hands are?”

“I…” It took Hinata a few moments to realize he needed to breath before his lungs exploded. Trying to keep his breathing quiet, Hinata closed his eyes and thought about what Yachi had said to him during their phone conversation. Though his mind was racing and thinking of 1000 things that were wrong with the current situation, his body was having a completely different reaction. His was lax against Kageyama, and though his heart was pounding in his chest, it wasn’t painful. He could feel the rush of heat in his face, and his lips felt dry despite how many times his tongue swiped over them. Still, the warmth that seeped into his back and the tingling in his fingertips that erupted when Kageyama guided his hands to the bag weren’t from disgust. It was from excitement, Hinata fighting the sudden urge to lace their fingers when Kageyama started to pull his own back.

“Now you want to go slow, or you’re going to put on too much frosting.” There was a firmness under Kageyama’s instructions, yet it didn’t scream tyrant. It was easy for Hinata to follow, and after a few professional critiques from the baker, Hinata’s third attempt at frosting the cupcake was a success. It wasn’t as neat at Kageyama’s and he had gotten some of the green frosting on his hand, but the work he had accomplished with the baker’s instructions was enough to make Hinata grin.

“I did it!”

“Not bad.” The slight praise from Kageyama had Hinata lifting his head to look up at him, taken aback by the lack of space between their faces. Though Kageyama was obviously taller than Hinata, in this moment the space seemed much smaller than he originally thought. From this close, Hinata could see that the dark blue within Kageyama’s eyes was solid, not spotty like the amber flecks he bore. Dark lashes framed the pretty eyes which now stared down at him in confusion, though Hinata felt like he was the one missing something. It wasn’t like he expected the baker to shower him with praise or words of confidence. And yet he felt like a high five or even a pat on the head would-
"I want him to touch me again." The words were in his head before he could stop them, finally connecting the missing link between his brain and body. The rush of need that swept through him made his head feel heavy, yet he didn’t want to pull away from the cage that Kageyama’s arms had unknowingly created around him. By now his back was resting against the sharp edge of the table, his spine not okay with the pain of having the stainless steel pressed into it. Still he remained still, staring up at the scowling face of the man who had been confusing him for weeks. Could it really be what Yachi had said? Could he like the cake and Kageyama?

“What the hell are you staring at?” Kageyama’s sharp question snapped Hinata’s sudden revelation, his hand quick to push the man’s face away from his own. Brown eyes filled with horror when seeing the green frosting he had spilled now smearing across the baker’s face, both men tensing at the action. Neither moved, blinked, or even breathed for what felt like an eternity to Hinata. Kageyama’s arms slowly dropped to his sides, giving the teacher an opportunity to stumble to the other side of the kitchen. The movement of Hinata seemed to snap Kageyama out of his trance, the baker giving a deadly growl before he turned toward the smaller man.

“Hinata…”

“I didn’t mean to do that!” The words didn’t seem to matter to Kageyama, Hinata giving out a panicked scream when Kageyama chased after him. The large kitchen gave the two plenty of area of run around, though it didn’t stop Hinata from knocking in many things along the way. Flour and eggs were among some of the mess now spreading over the kitchen floor, neither seeming to care. Kageyama was focused on capturing Hinata, while the chased man in question was desperate to prove his own innocence.

So caught up in watching Kageyama, Hinata didn’t notice he had stepped into his own trap. A broken egg sent the man in the air, Hinata’s grunt loud when his back slammed into the kitchen floor. Though his spine was livid for being abused for a second time that night, his head bouncing on the floor seemed to take precedence for his pain receptors. The room was spinning as Hinata groaned and closed his eyes, the throbbing feeling like drums inside his skull. He didn’t want to move from his spot, unsure how much the rest of his body was going to hurt.

“Hinata!” The call of his name made the teacher slowly peek one eye open, Hinata noticing the panic rounding Kageyama’s eyes as he knelt down next to him. “Are you okay?”

“I’m fine.” Except when he tried to sit up, the sudden rush of pain made him press his hand to his head and hiss. “Though my brain feels like scrambled eggs.”

“Stay here.” It wasn’t hard to listen to Kageyama’s request as the room was still slightly spinning. By the time his eyes finally got back into focus, Kageyama had returned with an ice pack wrapped in a hand towel. “Put this on your head for now.”
“Thanks,” Hinata whispered, the coolness of the compress making him hum in relief. Kageyama gave a quiet nod, though said nothing and let the next few minutes fall into silence. Though he wasn’t a fan of the quiet, his head was grateful for the reprieve of noise. Closing his eyes, Hinata tried to lean his head back to alleviate some pressure on his neck, though the sudden rush of dizziness made him cringe. Before he could pick his head back up to bear the discomfort in his neck, a cool hand behind his ear led his head to his left. The movement made him lose balance, but his shoulder met Kageyama’s chest while his head was cradled in the crook of the man’s neck.

“If your head doesn’t feel better in ten minutes, we’re calling the emergency room.” He could feel the quiet words against his temple as they vibrated the baker’s neck. He knew he should have refused the support from Kageyama, but the cool hand still pressed against his skin felt almost as good as the ice pack on his forehead. Unsure of how to take this new information, Hinata remained still, letting himself relax into Kageyama’s body. And as soon as he shut his brain off, the orange haired teacher felt some of the pain start to dwindle away. Within minutes of simply relaxing into whatever he had been fighting against, the throbbing dimmed and the strikes of pain disappeared into nothing. No longer needed the ice pack, Hinata let it drop into his lap, finally breaking the silence between them.

“Can I still help with the cupcakes?” His words were soft, slightly muffled by Kageyama’s shirt. The response he received was a snort, though it was dimmed down in respect to Hinata’s headache.

“Sure, idiot. After you clean up your mess.”

“I hate cleaning.”

“I hate seeing you get hurt.” Hinata’s eyes opened at Kageyama’s comment, the teacher slowly lifting his head to meet the now wide eyed stare of his companion.

“Did you say-”

“I meant anyone!” But from the panicked look that now refused to meet Hinata’s gaze, the teacher wasn’t buying Kageyama’s sudden compassion for everyone. The baker huffed as he shoved up onto his feet, distracting himself with brushing his shirt off while he glanced back toward the cupcakes. “I’m...you...ju-just clean this mess up so we can finish these and go home.”

“Fine, Bossy-yama” Hinata relented, though his eyes didn’t stray from the tense back of the baker. He wasn’t 100% sure what he was feeling for the snarky baker. But if he had to guess, Kageyama
was just as confused as him.

And that begged the question; what was going on between them?

Chapter End Notes

Lots of feel good feelings going around! But with love comes confusion and lots of other strange emotions. What will happen with Kuroo and Kenma? How will Tsukishima deal with unwelcomed feelings? Will Hinata be able to accept his changing interest in men? And just happens when tragedy strikes for one member of Little Crows? Find out next chapter!

Next Chapter- Lean on Me
Lean on Me

Chapter Summary

Suga, Oikawa, and Kenma delve deep into their own emotions, and a disaster strikes for one Little Crow member.

Chapter Notes

Ah hello hello! Thank you for continuing to read my stories. I normally post on Sunday, but since I will be busy all day tomorrow, I wanted to get this out early. So please, enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"All I'm saying is that you could have totally gotten us free food if you had unbuttoned your shirt a little more."

"Oikawa-"

"I mean really, how many times did he have to come and ask us if we were enjoying our dinner? Three would have been enough; this guy managed to ask the same question six times!" It took a lot of Suga's well-learned patience to ignore Oikawa. They had spent their day working side by side in order to put together an ethereal dream wedding. It was one of their more expensive weddings to date, so the two (Or at least Suga, as Tooru always wanted to work less) weren't willing to skip corners. After the extra hours of work, Oikawa decided the two needed to celebrate with a late dinner and drinks. Though Suga really did enjoy his friend's company, spending sunup to sundown with the tailor was a little taxing on his nerves. It didn't help that Oikawa had spent the night before sleeping in Suga's apartment, doing his best Houdini act when realizing one of his sex buddies had been trying to get in contact with him again. How the woman had managed to get Oikawa's address was a mystery, though Suga was sure that the less than cautious assistant had slipped the information during his attempt to sleep with her.

"Where did you say you left your charger?"

"It's in the living room," Oikawa answered instantly, his hand running through his hair as he pouted. "Do you think that Melody is still going to be outside my house? Maybe I should sleep at your apartment again. We could watch E.T."
"No way. Well, maybe to the movie, but no to the sleeping over. Every time you have to hide out from one of your conquests, I end up with a foot shoved in my back and drool in my hair." Suga's words were met with Oikawa's eye roll, the brunette sounding less than concerned over his boss's complaints.

"I think you're just trying to kick me out because you're hoping a certain hot officer will come for a late night visit."

"Tooru," Suga scolded, though the assistant took no notice of the warning.

"Speaking of the man with the killer thighs, have you seen him since your lovely make out session?"

"Not that it's any of your business," Suga started, giving a pointed look to his assistant before he continued.

"But we haven't been able to make time to talk much. He's been working a lot of nights lately and our schedules aren't matching up."

"No wonder Iwa-chan hasn't been entertaining me anymore! And here he's been telling me he's just been avoiding me."

“It could be a mix of both,” Suga said, laughing at the hurt look his assistant sent him.

“I could say the same to you, but I’m a good friend who wouldn’t ever want to hurt my lovely boss that way.”

“Well, if it makes you feel any better, the thought crossed my mind a few times.” Suga’s eyes swept to the rearview mirror after his confession, not wanting to see the passenger's reaction. He hadn’t gotten the feeling that Daichi disliked the kiss; if anything, the way he had grabbed the wedding planner was a testament of how much he enjoyed it. But their lack of meeting up after the moment had been a little more concerning than Suga wanted to let on. What if Daichi had second thoughts when he got home? He was super polite, so he probably didn’t want to flat out reject the fair haired planner. The fact that Suga and Daichi would have to still work together for Noya and Asahi’s wedding hung in the air, as well. What if the officer was just trying to avoid the rejection in fear that Suga would pull out of the wedding planning? He would never, of course, but Daichi
didn’t know that.

“You, my cute little friend, are out of your mind if you think Daichi-san doesn’t want a second go at the Suga train.” The sweet tone that Oikawa used when stomping Suga’s previous fear was more relaxing than the planner thought it’d be, making Suga laugh when Oikawa continued. “You are by far one of the best catches in this town, male or female. I’m excluding myself, of course. We both know I’d eat a man like Daichi-san alive in seconds.”

“Should I warn Iwaizumi-san of your appetite?” At Suga’s humorous answer, the assistant gave a shake of his head before grinning.

“That man is going to be more than enough to keep me full, and I’m not just talking about my hunger.” The line was so corny that Suga snorted from his laughter, making sure to keep his hands steady on the wheel despite his watering eyes.

“I can’t believe you just said that.”

“I only speak the truth; mama raised me right.” After a smirk, Oikawa leaned back in his seat, pushing his sock covered feet onto the dashboard as he hummed. “I already know my next move to catch him.”

“Well now I have to know.”

“Asahi and Noya, bless their souls, would like their wedding party to have a dance lesson before the event. They are a little concerned their eccentric friends may not be the smoothest on the dancefloor. So I decided to offer my rare services to them and give the wedding party a free lesson as a part of their package.”

“So you’re finally going to put those dancing skills to good use,” Suga surmised, knowing of the tailor’s intricate moves. It wasn’t surprising to find out the smooth man had been trained in ballet, tap, and other classic dance styles as a child. His mother was a native of Argentina, the home of the tango. When she moved to America, she became a dance teacher, and Oikawa had learned from days when his mother couldn’t find a babysitter. He was skilled, and could have had an illustrious career in dance if not for the fact that he lacked the passion for it. His interest had been in helping make the costumes for his mother’s dance studio, and the man found his true love in designing clothes that made other people happy.
“If I know one thing, it’s that a man like Iwa-chan will be putty in my hands after seeing I can belly dance.”

“You know I don’t think I’ve ever seen you work this hard to get laid. It’s almost romantic.” The casual way that Suga made the comment shouldn’t have tensed Oikawa’s shoulders, the strange reaction catching Suga’s interest. A loud complaint or perverted comment normally would follow Suga’s observation, Oikawa never taking any of his sex conquests seriously. It was a game to him, and he was always a winner. Yet as Suga pulled into his parking lot, Oikawa’s silence was a concerning cue that something was different. Waiting until he shut the car off, the wedding planner turned to face the still silent man in his passenger seat. “Tooru...is it possible that you may like-”

“It’s nothing like that!” The rushed snap from the tailor made Suga frown, his hand reaching out to rest on his friend’s knee. He was surprised to find that it was moving, a small tremble contradicting the annoyed look in Oikawa’s features. “I’m not like you; I just want to sleep with him. And since all the other groomsmen are being pursued by our co-workers, I’m determined to stick with Iwa-chan.”

“Maybe, but can I ask you something?” Suga kept his voice soft in order to keep from scaring his friend, knowing how little the brunet enjoyed speaking of his own emotions. Even though the wedding planner knew Oikawa’s heart was big, the tailor did all he could to keep the fact hidden away. He waited for his passenger to puff his cheeks and glance out the window to his right before Suga continued. “Why didn’t you want to sleep with Melody?”

“Because I already slept with her and I don’t do sloppy seconds.” The words were spoken as if Oikawa had said them a time or two, making Suga roll his eyes.

“Okay, then when was the last time you slept with someone?”

“Are you trying to get in my pants? I never took you for a backseat kind of lover, but-”

“It’s nothing just that!” Suga answered, cheeks pink when Tooru gave a sly glance to the backseat before sighing wistfully.

“One day, Suga-kun.” The flirty tone of Oikawa’s voice seemed to fade as his eyes lowered to the reflection in the window, his finger tapping his lower lip in thought. “Let’s see, the last person I slept with was...the groom’s sister at the princess themed wedding, I think. That dress was a pain to get off. Looked great on her, though; she really had to the body to pull it off.”
“Tooru, that wedding was almost two weeks ago.” Suga’s words made Oikawa blink, the tailor shaking his head and yanking his phone from the tight pocket of his pants.

“No way, it couldn’t have been that long ago. I mean I know I haven’t really found anyone I’ve been interested in from the last couple weddings but-ah my phone’s dead.”

“Here.” Suga offered his phone to the man, who barely mumbled a ‘thanks’ before he was opening the calendar app.

“Okay, so that wedding was right...wait.” The words died in his throat as he swiped the calendar back to the month of April, his lips parting in awe at the discovery. Suga could see the date was mid April, meaning the guess had been accurate. Still the brown eyes didn’t stray from the screen, Oikawa’s voice softer than before.

“But there’s no way.”

“You’ve been really focused on Iwaizumi-san,” Suga supplied, slowly taking his phone to draw the assistant’s attention back to his face. “But that’s okay! He’s a really good man, and there’s nothing wrong with being attracted to him in a romantic way.”

“That’s not it. I just...the wedding is just taking up a lot of my time! How can I think of sleeping with anyone?” There was an underlying edge to Oikawa’s tone that Suga could only deem desperation. He tried not to show his worry over his friend, though he was never quite as good at masking his emotions as the tailor. Now grimacing, Oikawa ripped his legs off the dashboard, shoving his feet into his shoes before pushing the car door open. “I’m going to call someone as soon as I charge my phone and fuck them on your couch.”

“I thought we were going to watch E.T?”

“I can multitask.”

“That’s totally not an option,” Suga protested, moving out of his car while Tooru marched to his apartment complex. If the assistant heard his complaint he didn’t answer, the two jogging up the slim hallway stairs.

“This place is so cramped and the hallways smells like cat urine; you need to buy a house.”
Sugawara knew the complaints falling out of Oikawa’s mouth were to distract himself from the previous conversation, so the wedding planner simply sighed and nodded his head.

“You’re probably right.”

“And then I could move in with you.”

“I wouldn’t expect anything less.”

“Kuroo and Kenma can share a guest room. Yamaguchi gets his own, but Tobio-kun is only allowed the basement.”

“This is a big house I’m buying.”

“Plus we should really talk about-” The brunet paused in both his words and movements, Suga letting out a soft squeak when bumping into the lean back of his co-worker.

“Talk about what?” Suga asked, rubbing his nose to alleviate the pain of hitting it into the tailor.

“Suga, did you lock your door this morning?” The odd question and lack of endearing nickname made Suga purse his lips, the fair haired man nodding despite Tooru not being able to see it.

“Of course, I do every time I leave the house. Why?”

“Your door is open.” The sentence took a second for Suga to process, the cramp in his stomach quick to form itself as he pushed past the still frozen tailor. Hazel eyes were wide when taking in the front door he had been sure he had shut that morning while listening to Tooru talk about which Avenger had the best body. But now the sturdy door was wide open, the door knob clearly gone from the gaping hole where it once stood.

“Oh my god.” He didn’t hesitate to rush into his home, barely hearing Oikawa’s disapproving shout as he moved.
The second he got into the hallway of his apartment he stumbled, a lamp and his coat rack laying on the floor. Unable to focus on a single object for long, Suga’s eyes flickered forward as his hand slid against the wall, turning on the living room light and sucking in a sharp breath. The whole apartment looked like a tornado had hit it. Pictures were ripped off his walls, the couch shoved into the corner and his bookshelf missing half of its contents. The TV that once sat on the stand opposite of the doorway was gone. Nothing was in the same place that it had been in the morning. Oikawa’s swear echoed in the room as he entered, the brunet moving through the chaos in order to check the plug where the couch had once sat.

“Those bastards even took my charger!”

“Oh my god,” Suga repeated, his heart pounding in his chest as he tried to keep his thoughts from bursting from his head. His eyes were still taking in the changes of his once clean home when his eyes lifted to his bedroom door, a chill dribbling through his spine. Again he moved without thought, body swirling with several emotions as he turned the light on. The bedroom looked as destroyed as the living room, but Suga’s eyes were focused on the nightstand by his bed. Rushing across the room, Suga’s knees smashed into the ground as he yanked open the first drawer, his blood running cold. It wasn’t empty, as a few miscellaneous trinkets Suga had acquired throughout life were still shoved in there. But the small silver box which held his parents rings was no longer sitting at the top. His hands dove into the drawer, hoping that it had simply been shuffled around and hidden behind other things. His breathing was heavy and unstable as he searched, his hands slamming the drawer shut before he looked around the floor. It was obvious that other things were missing, yet Suga found he couldn’t care as he crawled through the mess. His eyes were strained with panic as he shoved things out of his way, praying for a glimmer of the box he had just looked at the night before.

“Koushi? What are you doing on the floor?” Oikawa’s call of his name made Suga’s throat tighten, his world shifting to where he felt unable to breath. His head dropped onto the floor, his forehead feeling the scratch of his rug as he forced himself to speak.

“They took my parent’s rings.”

“Fuck.” A warm hand was pressed to his back, Oikawa’s voice low as he tried to console his trembling friend. “You have to breath, okay? You’re going to hyperventilate and that’s now how I want our first kiss to be.”

“I can’t believe they took-” The sudden waver in his voice cut his sentence off, the man unable to continue.

“Koushi, I need you to give me your phone. I’m going to call the police and we’re filing a report. I’ll be right outside the room if you need me, okay? These assholes are not going to get away with
this.” Suga’s fingers felt numb as he handed the phone to Oikawa, unable to fully accept the reality of what was going on. His head felt heavy when he lifted it off the floor, watching Oikawa move from the room to make his call. Closing his eyes, the wedding planner couldn’t shake the painful grip squeezing his heart. His hands dropped into his lap in defeat, unwilling to leave his crumpled spot on the floor.

“This has to be a nightmare,” Suga whispered, praying that someone would wake him up soon.

Because it felt like he was losing his parents all over again.

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“Just ask him out already.”

Daichi’s hesitation was obvious as he thought over Iwaizumi’s statement, brown eyes watching Sugar retrieve the ball he had previously thrown. The streetlights had long since turned on, yet both men seemed content to enjoy the warm night in the park. The hectic work schedule had made it hard to catch a night off, and it was obvious the Sugar needed the exercise. After finishing up their shift, the two dropped by home to grab the ball of energy to bring her to the park. The white dog was quick to trot back with the tennis ball snug in her mouth, the curl of her fluffy tail wagging in excitement as she dropped the ball in front of Iwaizumi’s feet. Despite the man’s scrunched up expression, the other officer didn’t hesitate to lift the slimy ball and toss it for the dog to retrieve again.

“It’s not that simple,” Daichi argued, Iwaizumi showing his lack of agreement with a snort.

“Sugawara practically jumped into your arms and kissed your brains out. How is it not simple? Was he a sucky kisser or something?”

“No way, he was…” Breathtaking was the word Daichi wanted to use. Instead he remained silent, watching Sugar happily run back to the two men on the bench.

There had been something special about the kiss he had shared with the amazing wedding planner. It was the best kiss he had been a part of since his first. Being able to feel the man pressed into his chest was something he hadn’t known he had been waiting for. Suga’s mouth was soft and pleasant, and if not for the terrible timing, Daichi wasn’t sure he would have left. For days the kiss still buzzed on his lips, and he caught himself thinking of the flushed cheeks Suga sported when
the two pulled away. The glow that came over the handsome face of the wedding planner was enough to distract Daichi throughout the day. Even now, it was hard for Daichi to keep himself from grinning and pressing his fingers to his lips.

“You should have just asked him that night, you chicken.” Sugar let out a bark when neither men had grabbed her ball, Daichi caving first while he answered.

“The timing didn’t feel right. I didn’t want Suga to agree to a date with me just because he was overtired or thankful for our help with the centerpieces.” No sooner had the ball left his hand did a pain burst from the back of his head. Daichi let out a loud swear as he glanced over to Iwaizumi, who was now returning his hand to rest behind his head.

“You are literally the dumbest smart guy I know. What else do you need, a personalized invitation from Sugawara to rip his pants off? He wouldn’t have kissed you if he didn’t like you; you didn’t see him laying one on me, right?” The fire sparking in Iwaizumi’s glare made Daichi bite his lip, disliking the inner voice that agreed with his vocal friend. “You need to just man up and ask him out or you’re going to lose your chance. Wasn’t some guy already trying to chat him up?”

“Suga wasn’t interested in him.” Was Daichi’s reply, disliking the instant discomfort that bloomed in his chest at the thought.

“Yeah, that guy. But what about the next one? After giving you a kiss like that, how long do you think he’s going to wait until he thinks that you’re not interested?”

“It’s...that’s just a what if scenario,” Daichi answered, pushing off the bench to whistle for Sugar. He tried to distract himself from Iwaizumi’s question, thumbing the clip of the leash as he watched his dog rush over to his owner. As he crouched to fasten the leash, the sound of Iwaizumi’s dreadful ringtone popped through the air, Daichi lifting his head when Iwaizumi sighed.

“Or maybe it’s happening now; he’s calling me.” When Iwaizumi flashed the caller ID to show Suga’s name on his screen, Daichi felt his lips dip into a frown.

Why would Suga call Iwaizumi? He glanced down to his own phone as his partner answered, not seeing a missed call or text message. Though he knew that Suga would never try to start something with the other officer (Suga had made it clear that he was quite interested in seeing how Iwaizumi and Oikawa turned out), it still made his mind wander. Had Suga actually started to give up on him? Did he think that Daichi didn’t want to talk to him anymore? The two hadn’t been able to connect recently because of their clashing schedules, something that had bothered Daichi more than it should have.
“Yeah, I know the complex. We’ll be right over.” The peeved look the crossed Iwaizumi’s face as he hung up the phone was the first hint for Daichi that something was wrong. The man pushed from his crouched position to face his partner, who was now jamming his phone into his pocket. “It wasn’t him; Oikawa was just using his phone.”

“What’s going on?”

“Sugawara’s not hurt.” Iwaizumi led off with the good news, but Daichi was aware that meant bad news was bound to be coming. “According to the story I just got, it looks like someone broke into Sugawara’s apartment while they were at work. Asskawa’s already called our precinct, but he wants us to come by. Sugawara’s really shaken up about it, and he thinks you may be able to help calm him down.”

“Does he live far?” The rush of adrenaline shooting through Daichi’s veins was instant, his fists clenching at the explanation. Though he had heard of break-ins happening in the town before, it was different when it concerned someone he knew. Hearing that Suga was okay had helped ease some of his anxious energy, but he made no complaint when Iwaizumi shook his head and told him to follow.

The apartment was in the opposite direction of their apartments, though seemed to be much closer to the park than his own. The jog had only taken ten minutes, Daichi knowing when they had made it to the complex when catching the flashing lights of familiar cop cars on the street they were running down. It was reassuring to see his co-workers were already on the case and were taking the issue seriously. The lights were causing Sugar to tug on the leash in excitement, seeming to think she was going to go for her weekly ride in Daichi’s cop car. Daichi let the dog yank on his arm as his eyes scanned the scene, stopping when catching sight of Oikawa and Suga sitting on the back end of one of the cruisers.

“Suga!” His call of the name had both men’s heads rising, Suga’s eyes wide with surprise when Daichi and Iwaizumi made their way over.

“Daichi? Wh-what are you-”

“Oops.” Oikawa’s non-apologetic tone was followed by the man slipping Suga’s phone back into the wedding planner’s lap. He pushed off the back of car as he shrugged. “I said I was calling the cops; I never said which ones.”
“You...you guys didn’t have to come,” Suga said, his eyes dropping to the phone now resting in his lap.

“We wanted to.” Daichi’s words were solid and unwavering, proving there was no room to question the statement. Suga’s shoulders tensed afterwards, leaving a small moment of silence before Oikawa sighed and glanced to Daichi’s partner.

“Ah, Iwa-chan! Come introduce me to all your hot co-workers. Though I must say, finally getting to see you in your officer’s uniform is quite the sight to behold.”

“I’ll make sure they know to put you on a pervert watchlist.” The blunt tone the cop used didn’t deter Oikawa from snagging his arm, dragging the grumpy cop away. Daichi didn’t let his eyes fall from Suga, whose shaky fingers were quietly toying with his phone.

“How are you holding up?”

“I’m okay. Luckily Tooru and I went out for dinner after work so we weren’t here when they...”

“That’s really fortunate,” Daichi answered, stepping forward to place his hand onto Suga’s shoulder. Finally the wedding planned looked up to Daichi, whose voice softened as he leaned closer. “What did they take?”

“Ah, that’s...they took a TV and some other electronics. They even took Oikawa’s ch-charger, can you believe that?” The smile that Suga gave was overshadowed by the shine in his eyes, his laugh fragmented as he attempted to continue. “Why would they take that? It barely even functioned most days.”

“I don’t-”

“They stole my parent’s rings.” The news made Daichi’s stomach drop out, his whole body tensing as Suga’s tears finally rolled across the sides of his face. “Their wedding rings and my mother’s engagement ring--why would they take those? Why?”

“Suga.” The leash was dropped as he reached forward, his arms quick to pull Suga’s trembling body into his embrace.
“Da-Dachi, I’m sorry, I- ” Soft cries of the broken man were pressed into Daichi’s shoulder, his tears soaking into the collar of his shirt. Daichi pressed his hand to the small back, trying to soothe the sobs that were racking Suga’s tiny form. He was a burst of sunshine and optimism most days, meaning he always outshined his lean form. The way he curled into Daichi’s embrace was painful, his gentle hands balling into the fabric over the officer’s chest. Gritting his teeth to keep his anger under control, Daichi buried his nose under the man’s ear, tightening his hold. He wasn’t sure how long he held Suga. His attention was focused on the soft tears of the wedding planner in his arms and making sure he knew he wasn’t alone in his moment of need.

“Hajime and I will do everything we can to get those back.” After Daichi’s words, Suga lifted himself away from the wet shoulder to look at Daichi, eyes red and puffy from his tears.

“You guys are so busy, you can’t.”

“I promise.” The serious tone that Daichi used made Suga’s eyes water again, though he closed them when Daichi pressed his hand to the man’s cheek and wiped the previous tears away. Suga’s cheek leaned into the touch, seeming to soothe the upset man from his earlier breakdown. The moment of quiet intimacy was a breath of fresh air for the two, though a sharp bark quickly broke it. Both men glanced down at the white dog Daichi had forgotten about, Sugar’s paws on the bumper of the cop car.

“Is this your dog?” Suga asked, slipping off the end of the car to crouch in front of the canine.

“Ah, yes, that’s-” Sugar wasted no time in jumping onto the wedding planner, knocking him onto his butt. The dog was eager to move into Suga’s lap, licking the cheek that Daichi hadn’t had time to clean. The affection motion made Suga laugh, petting the loveable dog despite Daichi’s embarrassed look. “Sugar!”

“Sugar?” Suga peered up at the still standing officer, the dog in question not hesitating to curl into the smaller man’s lap. Despite the heavy dog weighing down his legs, Suga made no complaints, keeping his cleared eyes on Daichi. “You named your dog Sugar?”

“I-It’s a really long story.” Daichi crouched down next to the two, his slight tug of Sugar’s leash doing nothing to move the dog from Suga’s lap. Too mortified by his dog’s antics, Daichi’s words tumbled from his mouth. “I mean, yes, that’s her name. But I didn’t name her after you. I mean I really like you and all, but I’ve had her for years and I didn’t even technically name her so that’s really-oh.”
“That’s…you like me?”

“I didn’t meant to just say that.” But even as Daichi denied it, the smile that sparked over Suga’s face made his heart warm. Suga’s soft laugh was music in the dismal air, the wedding planner pressing his face to the top of Sugar’s head as he continued to chuckle. Despite feeling mortified at his unprepared confession, Daichi felt his body unwind at the nose, watching as his dog and Suga cuddled on the ground in front of him.

“Thank you both for coming to cheer me up. I really needed this.” Peeking up from the white fur, Suga’s eyes held a happy light that didn’t feel faked or forced. It was a look that was meant to stay on Suga’s face, Daichi decided, his own smile starting to form as the wedding planner held the happy dog closer to him. The cop slowly dropped to sit on the ground next to them, his arm sliding to rest around Suga’s waist. Suga didn’t seem to mind the touch, leaning into Daichi’s side while Sugar leaned up to lick Daichi’s face. The action brought another bout of laughter from Suga, Daichi rolling his eyes despite his own quiet chuckle.

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“They better name their first child after me.” Oikawa’s nose scrunched as he watched the two, his hip resting on the side of the cruiser he and Iwaizumi were now hiding behind. “I mean really, how mushy do they need to be? It’s like watching Yuri!!! on Ice all over again.”

“I don’t see the problem.” Iwaizumi’s soft reply made Oikawa look at him, the dark haired officer leaning his back on the window while staring up at the darkened sky. “That was a pretty good show; nice character development and realistic situations.”

“Iwa-chan, I don’t think tough police officers are supposed to enjoy gay ice-skating. Though now that I think about it, I bet you had a huge boner for Viktor, huh?” The question from the tailor had Iwaizumi rolling his eyes, his elbow burying into the back of the grunting assistant.

“Do you ever shut up? All I’m saying is if two people are happy together, who are we to judge them?”

“You’re a closet romantic?”

“I just like seeing Daichi finally get the type of attention he deserves. I want him happy.” Iwaizumi’s words took Oikawa by surprise, the brunet slowly blinking as he thought over the
statement. Not noticing the look, the cop stole another glance at his content partner while speaking. “How are you holding up, anyways?”

“Huh?”

“I know it wasn’t your house, but you sounded different on the phone when you called me. Suga’s been out of it, so I’m guessing you’ve done most of the talking to the police. Just checking in to make sure you’re not being stupid and forgetting to take care of yourself.”

“I’m good,” Oikawa replied breezily, but his eyes reflected a serious expression. “Though I was probably freaked out when I called you. Suga-kun’s really important to me, and seeing him in pain always puts me on edge. Because of his kind and grounding personality, I’m able to live freely without worry or caution. He’s like...coming home after a really long vacation. No matter what craziness I get into, he’s my safe place. So when he’s not sunshine and rainbows, the world doesn’t feel right to me. And I want to hurt anything that takes that glow from him.”

It wasn’t often Oikawa allowed the flirty tone to dissolve from his voice. His upbeat personality and crazy lifestyle was what he was known for. Being serious was too boring. Life wasn’t meant to stay on the ground, but to fly to the highest dream and explore every whim or desire. He hated feeling things that brought him down. He despised talking about them even more. Yet as he leaned against the cold metal of the car, the words spilled from his mouth with no inhibition. The smile he so easily plastered onto his face was gone, eyes lidded and staring at the ground beneath their feet. When he got like this, the darkness started to creep into his mind. The world felt dull, and memories of his past trickled through his blood like a disease.

“I get it.” The shoulder that bumped into his jolted Oikawa, who looked up to the man that refused to meet his gaze. Instead, Iwaizumi stared forward, though he didn’t pull his body away from the warmth of the assistant’s arm. “Daichi and I will make sure to patrol the area more. Once the station finds out it was someone we know that got robbed, they’ll double their efforts to find any of the lost valuables. If the guys who broke in attempt to sell any of Sugawara’s stuff, we’ll be at the door before they get their receipt.”

“Aw, well aren’t you just the sweetest?” Defenses rising to cover blooming emotions, Tooru nudged his elbow into Iwaizumi and snickered. “Should I warn Daichi-san that his partner’s got a crush on Suga-kun?”

“It’s got nothing to do with that.” Smacking the back of the brunet’s head, the officer grimaced before letting his elbow rest on the shoulder of the lean tailor. “Sugawara didn’t do anything wrong. Some scum bags just decided to invade his sense of security. He should get justice. Not to mention he’s a good person; I tend to look out for those who deserve it.”
“Ah, the knight in shining armor. How could I forget?” The heavy weight of the officer’s arm resting on his collarbone wasn’t as uncomfortable as Oikawa expected, enjoying the warmth of the skin more than he should. It was rare for Iwaizumi to initiate contact between them, and the tailor felt his lips twitch into a smile at the thought.

“That goes for you too, idiot.” The ruffling of his hair felt weird to Tooru, a strange rush of heat sparking in his body at the intimate touch. He was used to having people touch his hair. Women loved sliding their hands through it when flirting with him. Men were a little more rough with their tugging, guiding his head whatever way they pleased. Oikawa took those touches as a compliment to his technique, entrapping both sexes with his charm and looks. Rough sex was always welcome in Oikawa’s bed. The initiation of touch was normally his first hint that his seduction was working. But the sloppy pat from Iwaizumi held no ulterior motives, Oikawa’s eyes widening at the crooked smirk the broad man gave him. “You’re a good guy, despite being a pain in the ass.”

“Wha…” For the first time since the tailor learned to speak, words escaped him. His fingers felt tingly by his sides when Iwaizumi crooked an eyebrow at him, though the cop was distracted when one of his co-workers shouted his name. Lifting his olive eyes to call back to the officer, Iwaizumi pushed away from the quiet man.

“I’ll talk to you later; good luck finding a charger. Wouldn’t want to think what your horde of fans would do if you couldn’t text them.” Then the officer was gone, jogging across the front yard to meet up with his co-worker. Oikawa’s eyes followed his form, an unsteady hand yanking at the fabric now plastered to his chest.

It was only when his palm pressed to his heart that he realized just how fast it was beating.

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Kenma wasn’t sick. Despite his small demeanor and lack of self-care, it was rare for the editor to catch a cold or feel under the weather. He fought off the flu with ease, even when everyone around him caught the virus. So when his stomach had started to hurt throughout the morning, Kenma passed it off as nothing. He had been getting random stomach cramps throughout the past week, though he didn’t like looking into it. Whenever he did, Kuroo’s name floated through his mind, and the pain intensified. So even as the pain of the cramps became severe, the quiet man refused to give it a second thought.

The fever that had spread over his body throughout the day was another thing he tried to ignore. Despite his need to change into shorts from his overheated body, Kenma simply curled onto the couch and stayed quiet. The second that he let on that he wasn’t feeling well, he knew the man currently taking a shower in their bathroom would over exaggerate. It was just in Kuroo’s nature when it came to Kenma. The blond spent most of his day on the couch, wrapped up in blankets
with his PSP glued to his hands. The heat of the blanket was making the back of Kenma’s neck sticky with sweat, but he refused to pull it off. Kenma always kept a blanket around him, and the lack of one would send off warning bells to Kuroo.

He only had to keep the act up for a little longer. A half-open gaze to the clock in the corner of his device showed that it was nearing 8pm, which meant that Kuroo would be leaving soon. The two had the following day off, and Kuroo had been asked to go out with Bokuto’s friend again. The two had hit it off well, according to Kuroo. This wasn’t a surprise to Kenma, knowing just how easy it was for his social friend to get in the good graces of anyone he spoke to. Pictures on her facebook showed that the brunette was gorgeous, and the photographer said she was like the female version of himself. Kuroo always had a smile on when he spoke about her, and seemed to more than excited to be hanging out with her again.

A sudden rush of pain in Kenma’s stomach made him curl tighter on the couch, his breathing shaky to try and keep himself from whimpering. The discomfort in his abdomen stayed longer than before, Kenma’s insides feeling queasy when he tried to swallow. His eyes barely managed to keep on his screen as he shoved the previous thoughts out of his head. He managed to ease some of his ache, though pain lingered in his cramping stomach. The noise of the bathroom’s door opening meant that Kuroo was out of his shower, Kenma sighing while he pushed up to glance over the back of the couch. The motion made his head dizzy, Kenma trying to hide his wince behind the strands of blond covering his face.

“Shit, I can’t find my belt.” Kuroo looked...good. Though being attractive was natural for the bed head, it seemed that the man had put some actual effort in his outfit. Days off normally meant sweatpants and a stained t-shirt for Kuroo, keeping Kenma company on the couch while the two binge watched horrible sci-fi movies. But that was not the case tonight. Kuroo’s red shirt accentuated the muscles of his arms, the black jeans resting snug on lean hips and fit legs. The photographer ruffled his own hair while he glanced around the living room, his eyes seeming to lose interest in the missing belt when catching Kenma’s gaze. A lazy smirk and playful eyes accentuated the exotic beauty of the man’s face, Kuroo holding his arms out for inspection. “What do you think? Would you take me home?”

“You live here,” Kenma answered automatically, slowly lowering himself back onto the couch with a sigh. The motion made his whole stomach flip, and Kenma had to swallow the spit that had started to pool in his mouth. His fever seemed to skyrocket, though he wasn’t sure if it was because of Kuroo’s embarrassing statement, or the rising temperature of his body.

“Aw, you’re no fun.” The socked feet of his roommate could be heard moving across the floor, Kenma pulling the blanket closer to himself to hide his flushed cheeks. The sudden need to breath through his mouth felt strange, but breathing normally only twisted his stomach more. “If you need me, I’ll be at the Black Cat Cafe. There’s a new band playing there that I really wanted to see. I should be back by midnight, okay?”
“Mm.” The quiet nose that came from his mouth was the only thing he could manage to get out, worried his voice would show how unsettled he was. From the now swishing contents in his belly or the long span of time Kuroo would be spending with his new ‘friend’, he wasn’t sure. The two were going to dinner. Not only dinner, but to see a performance of Kuroo’s choosing. And he wasn’t expected back until midnight. If those weren’t the parameters for a date, then Kenma needed an updated definition.

“Do you want me to bring you something to eat? You normally love their nachos.” The innocent question had Kenma’s whole body jerking, Kuroo’s face showing his surprise at the strange motion. “Kenma?”

“Oh.” Okay, maybe he really was sick. Kenma’s little feet scrambled to the floor as he darted through the living room, his blanket forgotten on the couch as he practically slammed into the bathroom. He could barely make out Kuroo’s second call of his name as he dropped to his knees in front of the toilet, his hands shoving his hair out of his face. In seconds the man was heaving, his stomach’s pain doubling as he threw up. Everything in front of him blurred from the hot tears now filling his eyes. He tried to keep himself calm, but the sudden need to retch made his heart overwork and his ears ring. Everything in his body hurt, his stomach refusing to settle. A strangled cry left his lips before a cool hand slipped under his shirt, feeling like ice against the clammy back.

“I knew you weren’t feeling good.” The soft tone that Kuroo used made Kenma try to blink back his tears, disgusted with how his nose dripped with fluid. He was a mess, and he could over shiver when Kuroo’s hand left his back, both hands moving to hold his hair. “Let me tie this up.”

Kenma wanted to refuse, but his heart was just as conflicted as his body. As much as Kenma didn’t want to be a burden on Kuroo, feeling his reassuring touch over his forehead was calming. Just knowing how gross he must appear instantly sent Kenma’s anxiety through the roof. He wasn’t a looker to begin with, and this would only emphasize that fact. He knew the thought was pointless; the only one seeing him was Kuroo, and the man didn’t bat an eye at the disheveled look Kenma was presenting. He wanted to be strong enough to push Kuroo away, yet the editor was positive his arms were barely able to hold himself over the toilet at this point. Still, he tried, waiting until Kuroo leaned over to flush the toilet to speak.

“I’m...okay.”

“You’re obviously not, kitten. You look like you’re going to be glued to this spot all night. Why didn’t you tell me you weren’t feeling good? You seemed fine last night when you and Hinata were playing that weird video game.”

“Shouyou…” The mention of the other man made Kenma sigh, his eyes closing slowly as he tried to breath slowly. “He brought me leftover sushi from his school meeting.”
“Was there something wrong with it?”

“Maybe,” Kenma answered quietly, thinking about the other man’s morning text. Hinata had talked about three of his co-workers calling out of work because they had been throwing up all night. Kenma hadn’t put the two together until just now. He had been so sure that his symptoms were because of Kuroo and his date, that he never thought of food poisoning. Hinata had even joked about warning him if he didn’t feel good, though at the time Kenma was still ignoring his stomach pains. But the now pounding headache and feverish skin sounded a lot more like he had been exposed to bad sushi. Disliking how he had swept over such an important detail, Kenma tried to lift his head to speak. “You should go.”

“What? Why would I leave you like this? I’ve already sent a text saying I wasn’t going tonight.”

“Please, don’t,” Kenma whispered, sniffling when his eyes started to water. He wasn’t sure if he was going to throw up again, but his body continue to tremble. “Shouyou…said he’d come over if…” “Wait, you told the shrimp you weren’t feeling good? How long have you been feeling sick?” His head was too heavy to lift from the porcelain, but Kenma peeked from the corner of his eye at the pained look on Kuroo’s face. “Kenma, why didn’t you tell me first?”

“You…had plans.”

“Which I would drop in a second for you. I’ve always taken care of your when you’re not feeling good, mentally or physically.”

“I don’t want that,” Kenma admitted, his eyes glancing away from the photographer as another bubble of anxiety swelled inside his chest. He felt ready to puke again, though he was sure it was an emotional reaction to his thoughts. “If you want to date this woman seriously, you can’t continue to take care of me.”

“Kozume.” The serious voice that Kuroo used made Kenma flinch, his head tilting back toward the bowl and spitting into it. Kuroo’s hand returned to his back, rubbing comforting circles as he continued. “No matter who comes into my life, remember one thing. You will always be the most important person to me. And I’ll be here to take care of you.”

“…Okay.” Kenma didn’t understand why his heart felt lighter at the man’s words. Kuroo was always affectionate with the people he considered important. It wasn’t like the dark haired man would abandon Suga or Oikawa, either. Yet even as he tried to reason with himself, the logic tossed
itself out the bathroom window when Kuroo brushed his moving lips against Kenma’s exposed ear.

“And just for the record, I’d never date that girl.” His back tensed at the sudden statement, and he knew Kenma felt it against his palm when he gave a low chuckle. “She’s a riot, but not my type. I think I like my romantic interests a little more intelligent and quiet. And didn’t I tell you I have a thing for blondes?”

“Oh.” The relief he felt pouring through his veins doused his body like cold water, Kenma trying to keep his face stoic despite his confusion. Why did that make him happy? He wanted to see his friend in a loving relationship. He didn’t expect Kuroo to be single forever. Yet as the words lingered in his mind, Kenma’s face flushed for another reason. The photographer didn’t hang out with many people he could call quiet and intelligent. Kuroo was never good at keeping that specific demographic in his life for long. He was a social butterfly, and he enjoyed the company of chatty people. In fact, the only person he knew that fit that description was-

The second round of throw up came unexpectedly, Kenma’s food poisoning only being enhanced by the sudden rush of anxiety ricocheting in his stomach. Kuroo didn’t pull away at the violent noise, continuing to mumble comforting words and endearments into the blond’s ear. Kenma’s energy was depleted, his whole body sore from throwing up. He wiped his face with the back of his hand, his mortification doubling at the glimmering tears against his skin. The only downfall of never getting sick was how inexperienced he was to the natural reactions from his body. Despite understanding that crying was normal during these types of situation, Kenma still felt embarrassed. But Kuroo was there with a cold washcloth, giving his genuine smile to the smaller man while cleaning off his face.

“I’m really going to squash that shrimp the next time I see him for feeding you bad seafood.” He made sure to swipe twice under Kenma’s reddened nose before he pulled back, dropping the dirty washcloth into the hamper. “I’m going to give Suga a ring to see if he can bring over some ice chips and ginger ale. After that, I’ll help you get to bed, okay?”

“Yes,” Kenma answered quietly, his eyes closing when a familiar pair of lips pressed to his temple. It was soft, quick, yet impossible for Kenma to understand. Why would Kuroo want to kiss Kenma after watching how disgusting he was?

“I’ll be right back, kitten.” Then the man was gone, Kenma’s stomach still fluttering. Only this time, he didn’t feel like he was going to be sick. Instead, it was warm, helping to ease a smidge of the pain still lingering in his body. Kenma’s sigh was silent was he leaned against the toilet, a smile weak on pale lips when hearing Kuroo’s muffled laugh through the bathroom door. No matter how anxious, disgusting, or unstable Kenma got, Kuroo would always be by his side. And Kenma couldn’t help but feel like that was exactly where he was meant to stay.
The emotions! The feels! The bad sushi! Lots of stuff going on in this chapter, so I hope you love the good parts way more than the bad. So, how will Daichi and Suga's relationship progress from here? Will Oikawa ever admit he's got feelings for Iwaizumi? What other obstacles do Kenma and Kuroo have to jump through? And will one of our lovely Little Crows teammates have to deal with early heartbreak? Next week is a doozy of a chapter, so make sure you comment and tune in.

Next Chapter: The Highs and Lows of Falling
The Highs and Lows of Falling

Chapter Summary

There are two sides to every situation, and feelings were not the exception.

Chapter Notes

Ahhh thank you all for the influx of comments/kudos! I'm so happy that people are still enjoying this. So hope you love this one just the same!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Going to eat some yummy cake, chomp chomp chomp.” Hinata’s wacky song was sung between a wide grin as he hopped off his scooter. Orange hair didn’t lose its bounce as the teacher pulled his helmet off, but Hinata ruffled it just in case. Bright brown eyes peered up at the large wedding venue, the man taking a moment to breathe in the crisp May air. Though spring had long ago started, the nights were still on the borderline of chilly when he used his scooter. The red scarf wrapped around his neck was large and warm, the short man pulling it over exposed lips. Even as the sun snuck the rays of heat behind the horizon, Hinata couldn’t be bothered. Today was Wednesday, which meant he got to fill his face with cake and hang out with-

“Shouyou?” The voice of the wedding planner caught the man by surprise, the teacher nearly tripping on the first step to the venue before recovering. Glancing up at the man who had called his name, Hinata gave a giant wave over his head.

“Suga-san!”

“It’s nice to see you, though I must admit I’m a little surprised.” The confusing statement made Hinata frown, his eyes glancing down to the phone now yanked out of his pocket.

“It’s Wednesday, see?” Holding the phone up above him, the teacher wasn’t confident that Suga could see the small calendar from the top step of the venue. Laughing at the motion, Suga shook his head and gave a sweet smile.

“I know what day it is, Shouyou. But I just spoke to Tobio, and he said that he had already finished his work for the day.” The words deflated the earlier excitement in Hinata, who frowned as Suga continued. “I thought he would have called you, but he may have lost track of time and forgot.”
“You mean I don’t get to hang out with Kageyama?” He knew his voice reflected how upset he was. It wasn’t often he got to have a night without grading school work or thinking up new subject plans. Despite the mandated nature of Hinata having to come here in order to pay back his debt, the teacher had started to see the task as fun. Kageyama was a pain in the ass, sure, but he had his moments. And despite the weird confusion Hinata felt whenever the baker praised his attempts at culinary or their skin touched, the short man didn’t want to skip a day. But if the blockhead wasn’t teaching Hinata a trick for frosting or the differences between light and dark pans, then Kageyama would be fine with calling it an early night.

“That depends.” The soft comment pulled Hinata out of his own head, peeking up to see Suga digging his hand into his coat pocket. “Do you know how to ice skate?”

“Huh?”

“If you do, here.” Jogging down the stairs, the fair haired man gave a cheeky smile before placing two pieces of paper into the teacher’s hands. On closer inspection, Hinata realized they were tickets. “One of our brides gave us a pack of tickets to the ice palace her father owns in town. I was supposed to go with Tooru tonight, but I received a call from the police involving my break-in and they need me to come fill out some paperwork. Tooru got pulled into a last minute alteration with a finicky maid-of-honor, so I thought I was going to have to waste them. But now that you’re here, I can give them to you.”

“Wah, really?! I can really have them?” When Suga gave the ecstatic man a gentle nod, it only took the teacher a second to jump onto the wedding planner. He could feel Suga’s laugh as he buried his face into the older man’s chest, little arms tight around the owner’s waist. “This is going to be so awesome!”

“Glad to be a help.” Hinata felt a gentle pat on his head before he yanked back, eyes shimmering while he stared at the pleased looking Suga.

“I can’t wait to go tell Kageyama. Is he still in the kitchen?”

“I think he said he was just finishing packing up when I called him. He should be out soon.” But Shouyou didn’t want to wait. Instead, he released Suga from his iron grip to bound up the stairs, skipping every other step in excitement. Using the last stair as a boost, Hinata launched himself toward the front door, leaving no way to stop himself when Kageyama appeared in the doorway.
“Suga-san, did you-woah!” Quick reflexes by the baker had him sidestep the ball of energy, Hinata stumbling into a landing before turning back to face the easily annoyed employee. “What the hell are you doing?”

“I was coming to see you! Suga-san gave us...is that a barrett?” The sudden blinking from the blue eyes gave the hint that Kageyama had no idea what the man was talking about. But Hinata had enough little girls in his classroom to know a hairclip when he saw one. It was currently holding up the black bangs of the tall man, the neon pink contrasting the gloomy man’s personality drastically. Suddenly feeling a burst of laughter rippling in his chest, Hinata couldn’t stop from leaning over himself as his words were broken up be rebellious giggles. “Is it sparkled, too?! Where did you get that?”

“What are you talking about? I don’t-” But when Kageyama’s hand swiped over his now bare forehead, the baker froze. It took a second for his cheeks to darken in color, a mortified grimace crossing his features as he ground out the next word. “Oikawa-san…”

“Now I know why he offered to check in on your earlier.” Suga’s small laugh was benign to the cackles of Hinata, the wedding planner tucking his hands into his pockets. “He did tell me that ‘code cyan’ meant a ugly duckling makeover before he left.”

“He said he was getting something out of my hair,” Kageyama grumbled, sending a scathing glare toward Hinata as the smaller man started to choke on his laughter.

“Kageyama, play nice. I’ll be sure to talk to Tooru tomorrow, okay? Enjoy your evening, you two.” Then with a wave, Suga turned from the weird duo and walked toward his car. It took until Sugawara turned on his engine for Hinata to gain control of his body, his hands wiping the sides of his eyes to make sure he hadn’t started to cry. A few deep breaths from Hinata seemed to finally compose him, though once glance back to the pink device had him grinning like a fool.

“You look so stupid.”

“Idiot!” A large hand reached out toward his head, but paused with a hesitation that Kageyama had never used before. Hinata’s confusion must have been obvious to the baker, who pressed his lips tightly together while he crossed his arms. “How’s your head doing?”

“Oh, from the crash? It’s fine! Good as new, really. The doctors said I was fine to drive and stuff, so nothing permanent.” The weird look now passing over Kageyama’s face was hard for Hinata to recognize. When his mind finally stopped on relieved, he questioned if he was seeing things. Maybe he wasn’t as fine as he thought. Shaking his head once to make sure the phantom feelings
of pain were completely gone, Hinata took a glance to the paper pressing into his palm before focusing the conversation. “Oh yeah! I heard you were done for the day?”

“None of the cakes were intricate or oversized, so I was able to finish early today. I was going to call you, but I…” There was a moment of silence between them before the taller man coughed and lifted his gaze to the darkened sky. “I didn’t have your number.”

“Why didn’t you just ask Suga-san? He took down all our information the first time we met.”

“Why does it matter? You know now, right?” Kageyama snapped out, Hinata rolling his eyes to show his obvious annoyance with the baker’s prickly mood.

“I had to drive all the way out here to find out. But I guess I’m not mad, since Suga-san gave us these!” Posing like a superhero as he tossed his occupied hand in the air, Hinata felt his grin take over his face when Kageyama had to cross his eyes to focus on the tickets.

“What are those?”

“Tickets, duh.”

“For what?”

“There’s an ice skating rink down the street and-”

“No.” The instant refusal dropped Hinata’s mouth open, scrambling to follow after the man who was now descending the stairs.

“What do you mean no!”

“Exactly what I said.”

“That’s not an acceptable answer!” Jumping in front of the baker before he could step off the last stair, Hinata held his arms out to stop the man from continuing. “Are you just scared because I’m
going to look super cool and you’re going to look lame?”

“As if something as stupid as this would make you look cool.” Feeling frustrated at Kageyama’s dismissal of his plans, Hinata tried to think of something to sway the grumpy chef.

“Well...well, you’ve got to go because you owe me!”

“From what?”

“F-From giving me a head injury. And not checking in on me all week because you were too dumb to get my number from Suga-san, Bakayama!”

“It’s not like I pushed you or anything. And why is it my job to call you for being an idiot?” Enjoying the look of embarrassment now covering the taller man’s face, Hinata stepped up on the stair Kageyama was currently standing on, moving into his personal space.

“You. Owe. Me.” To emphasise his point, Hinata pressed his finger into the center of Kageyama’s chest with each word. The sudden contact obviously made the other man uncomfortable, his eyes glaring down to the grinning teacher and scoffing.

“This is blackmail.” But even as he complained, Kageyama snagged the tickets from Hinata’s hands and shoved him off the step. By the time Hinata had realized what had happened, the taller man was on the move, his eyes focused on the single car still in the parking lot. “If you make fun of me, I’ll kill you.”

“Then you should probably take out the barrett.”

The loud smack on the back of his now healed head made Hinata grumble when closing his door, sending little glares at the silent driver. The headlights were bright as they pulled out of the driveway, Hinata’s arm resting on the window to try and get comfortable. Despite leaning back in the seat, Hinata couldn’t shake the weird feeling shifting through him. It took three more streets of silence to realize the problem; Hinata hated quiet car rides. Though he was a fan of long trips to the beach or traveling to wherever Yachi decided to drive on their summer adventures, Hinata couldn’t stand when there was no conversation. The quiet always made his stomach cramp, and there were times he had even thrown up because of it. It was like the talking distracted him from his slight car sickness. Knowing Kageyama would probably gut him like a fish and leave him on the side of the road if he puked in his car, Hinata turned his attention to the quiet man beside him.
“Let’s talk.”

“Why?”

“Because we don’t really know that much about each other.” That was truer than Hinata realized. Though the two had spent a few Wednesdays together in the kitchen, being away from ‘Little Crows’ made this a whole new experience. It was the first time the two were truly hanging out. Kageyama wasn’t just the baker of a wedding venue; there had to be things about him that went further than his cakes. Determined to make the trip worthwhile (and to calm his stomach), Hinata spoke. “Want to play the question game?”

“I doubt you’ll take no for an answer.”

“Great, I’ll start!” Dismissing the obvious irritation in Kageyama’s tone, Hinata tapped his finger on his cheek while staring up at the roof of the car. “Well, I guess I’ll start easy. How old are you, and when’s your birthday?”

“That’s two questions.”

“So? You can ask two if you want to.” The silence was short-lived after the statement, Hinata snickering when he realized the baker couldn’t think of anything to refute him.

“I’m 23. My birthday is December 22nd.”

“Wah, that’s so close to Christmas.”

“I guess?”

“And that means I’m older than you!” There was a genuine look of shock on Kageyama’s face as Hinata nodded, enjoying the feeling of superiority as he continued. “I’m 23, too, but I’ll be 24 on June 21st. Which means I’m your senp-”
“How tall is your family?” The question sucked the gusto from Hinata, who felt his spirits immediately dwindle at the sensitive question.

“Why would you ask that?!”

“I wanted to see if your height was genetic.” The sentence sounded like a genuine curiosity on the baker’s part, making Hinata grumble as he glanced to the window.

“We’re all basically the same height. But I’m like, two inches taller than my sister, so ha!”

“I think that’s expected.”

“Well are you taller than your siblings?”

“I don’t have any; I’m an only child.” From the corner of his eye, Hinata saw a slight discomfort slip onto Kageyama’s face, making the teacher prop his seat up.

“Is that a bad thing?”

“No, just…” Kageyama blushed, lowering his voice for the next statement. “My parents are…they’re very proud of me. Overly proud. I don’t bring acquaintances to my childhood house.”

“What, do they have your naked baby pictures plastered on their walls or something?” From the sudden tense appearance of the baker’s shoulders, Hinata had his answer. Before Hinata could burst into laughter, Kageyama flickered his eyes over to the man.

“What do you do when you’re not at work?”

“That’s easy; I love yoga.”

“I don’t believe you.” Hinata shrugged at the lack of confidence in Kageyama’s answer, the teacher stretching his arms over his head.
“It helps me concentrate. People used to complain about how I sucked at staying on topic at meetings, so one of my co-workers suggested I take a yoga class. It’s free at my gym on Sunday mornings, and it really keeps me in the zone. Plus, I’m super flexible, so I can do the really challenging positions! Sometimes I teach my kiddos easy moves during recess; really tuckers em out before nap time.”

“I still don’t get why people entrust their children to you; are you sure they don’t think you’re a student teacher?” There was a hint of a tease in Kageyama’s question, Hinata huffing before he flopped back onto his seat.

“My question; if you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be?”

“Vienna.” The word came out as if rehearsed, Kageyama’s face relaxing as he continued. “There’s a bakery there called Demel. It’s got a cake musume I’d like to visit, one day. The bakers make their creations on full display of their customers, too.”

“That sounds delicious,” Hinata replied, his mouth watering at the description. “Maybe they’ll give you a run for your money.”

“They’re some of the best-trained bakers in the world,” Kageyama said, waiting until he rolled to a stop at the red light to look at his passenger. The teacher blinked up at him, an air of innocent confusion edging his response.

“But they’re not you.” It was so simple for Hinata to say, not understanding the widened look from his counterpart as he shrugged. “I’m sure there’s are good, but I’d pick your desserts any day.”

“Y-You idiot.” The slight stutter from the taller man paired well with the wobbly smile and red flush he desperately tried to hide. The strange look on the man’s face made Hinata laugh, his eyes moving to scan the area around them. Brown lit up in recognition of the familiar ice rink, tugging on Kageyama’s sleeve in excitement.

“Ah, look! We’re here!”

“Don’t tug on me while I’m trying to drive,” Kageyama scolded, turning into the parking lot once the light turned green. It was easy to find a parking spot in the empty area, Kageyama sighing while he shut the car off. “I don’t know why you’re so happy about this.”
“Because it’s super big and they have the best skates here. You’ve never been here?” Kageyama’s mouth straightened as he unbuckled himself, pushing his door open while he spoke.

“I’ve never been ice skating, period.”

“What?!” Surprised, Hinata yanked out of his seat, chasing after the baker who had already started to walk into the building. “I was always coming here as a teen! It was the best place for a first date; that or the movies, but I hated being quiet for that long. Where did you even take your girlfriends?”

“Nowhere, since I’ve never been interested in women.” The lackluster tone Kageyama used made the information seem expected, blue eyes slowly slinking to look at the stunned face of the teacher. “I’ve known that I like men since I was fifteen.”

“W-Wait, you’re gay?”

“Yes. And since you’re in a gay wedding, I’m going to assume you’re not homophobic.” Instantly Hinata shook his head, though his cheeks started to rise in color while he tried not to stare at Kageyama’s face too long.

“It’s no biggie to me. I just, uh...alright, new plan! I’m going to make you a skating pro by the end of the night. So let’s get you on the ice!”

The task was easier said than done. From the initial admission, to the choosing of skates, Kageyama looked ready to call the whole thing off. Hinata tried his best to keep the man distracted, talking about the crow tattoo he had gotten on his shoulder for a graduation present and just how painful it had been. The baker answered with single word responses or primal grunts, his back remaining stiff as he slowly tied the laces to his skates. By the time the two walked over to the rink, Hinata was sure the dark haired man would pass out. Like he was born to skate, Hinata popped onto the ice and easily found his rhythm. Skating was something he didn’t get to do often, but that he had taken a liking to. Glancing around the huge indoor rink, the teacher noticed how vast the space looked without being flooded with people. The off season meant there was barely anyone else there, though a few kids seemed to be getting a lesson on the opposite side of the rink. Catching sight of the piped skating aid toddlers used, Hinata grinned before he turned to the man now clutching the boards with a grip he was worried would splinter the barrier.

“Do you wanna use the kiddie aid? I think the three-year-old is done with it.”
“I’m leaving. Walk home.” The bite in Kageyama’s tone didn’t weaken Hinata’s laugh, who easily skated over to the man now trying to pull himself back to the entrance. It wasn’t easy yanking the baker’s hands away from their post, but Hinata managed to wiggle his fingers between Kageyama’s to pull him onto the ice. Eyes wide with obvious nerves, Kageyama’s legs wobbled instantly at the change. “Hinata, you dumbass-”

“Just relax; I’ve been doing this since I was a kid!” To prove it, Hinata easily started to skate backwards, pulling the frazzled baker along with him at a slow pace. “Just let me lead you, for once.”

“You should have let me say no to coming,” Kageyama snapped out, but didn’t pull away when Hinata continued to skate through the rink. Blue eyes darted down to their feet, his concentration focused on mimicking the movements of the skilled skater in front of him. His skating was choppy, at best, but Hinata’s desire to tease the fumbling man dissolved when a trip up made Kageyama’s hands tightly squeeze his own.

The realization of the intimate hand holding had the embarrassment rushing to his ears. This was a move he used with girls when they faked being novices at skating. If any of his guy friends had complained of being useless on the ice, Hinata would have bragged about his better skill and left the men in the dust. But here, glancing up at the handsome face of the baker, Hinata didn’t hate the warmth pooling between their hands. Instead, he slowed his speed, allowing their bodies to move a little closer than before. When Kageyama learned how to skate, would he still want to hold Hinata’s hand? Would he get that proud little smirk on his face that always appeared when perfecting the ganache on one of his cakes? The first time Hinata had taught a girl to skate, he had been rewarded with a cherry lip balm kiss. Unconsciously his eyes fluttered to the mouth in front of him, the lower lip snagged between teeth as his partner concentrated on his movements. If Kageyama kissed him, what would it taste like? Would he bite Hinata’s lip the same way he was nibbling his own? Or would he simply overpower Hinata, pressing their mouths and bodies against the boards to fully explore the teacher. Hinata’s desire to find out came suddenly, nearly overwhelming his body with an influx in sexual curiosity.

Kageyama picked that moment to lift his gaze, the sudden eye contact too hot for Hinata to bear. He jerked back roughly, not realizing how far the two had strayed from the center. His shoulders smashed into the boards loudly, their connected hands dragging Kageyama forward. When the larger body slammed into his own, Hinata lost his breath, the teacher nearly falling if not for the sudden grasp of large hands on his hips. A leg was pressed between his thighs, keeping Hinata from sliding onto the cold ice. It took a second for Hinata to realize their new position, with Kageyama practically caging him against the wall he might have previously fantasized about.

“Do you like hurting yourself or something?” Blue eyes glared down at him from a distance that seemed far too little, Kageyama’s warm breath hitting his cheek. “Did you hit your head again?”
“Uh…” Words were a foreign thing for the teacher who couldn’t focus on a response. He was surrounded by Kageyama, and the warm thigh he was currently perched on was sucking all of his concentration away. Seeming too worried about Hinata’s impact with the wall to realize their position, Kageyama only snapped to his senses when a couple kids giggled while skating past the two.

“They’re so cute,” one of the girls whispered, unintentionally allowing the pair to hear her. Sharing in a mutual mortification, Kageyama yanked back, instantly landing on his ass when untangled from the teacher. Hinata simply slid down the wall, his legs meeting the cold rink with little resistance. He could feel his face explode in color from the interaction. Why had he thought of Kageyama like *that*?! How was he supposed to face him now?

“You are the worst teacher ever.” The insult was slung at Hinata from the taller man, Kageyama giving him a glare as he tried to push up onto his knees. Realizing the man had no idea how to get back onto his skates, Hinata scrambled over to help.

“Sorry, I got distracted. I’ll stay focused this time, promise!” Holding his hand to the now shorter man, Hinata tried to give a reassuring smile to the scowl sent his way. Muttering under his breath, Kageyama took the offered help, the two both pulling to get Kageyama back onto his feet. He still wobbled in his spot, which was the excuse Hinata made for why the slender fingers were slipping between his again.

“I’m going to be bruised all week.” Yet even as Kageyama complained, he pressed his palm to Hinata’s, actively avoiding eye contact. Still it was obvious the baker wasn’t planning to let go, the implication making Hinata beam. He skated forwards again, keeping his pace slow while he tried to direct the unsure skater into how to angle his feet. Maybe he wouldn’t get a kiss tonight. But he knew, as he laughed at the stumble of his skating partner, that this night was important for a completely different reason. The low pleasure pooling in his stomach was an implication that Hinata wasn’t sure he was ready to find out. It was a weird and scary thought, even if he had been skating around it for a few months. He didn’t know if he was ready to face the reality of his feelings yet.

But for now, holding Kageyama’s hand felt right, and that was all that mattered.

~**~

Tsukishima was sure regularly visiting the greenhouse was not a good use of his very precious time. When questioned by Yamaguchi, the lawyer claimed it wasn’t quite fair for him to win the bet without stopping by to ‘watch the magic’ occasionally. But there was no intellectual or
prosperous benefit from wasting his gas to drive there after work. Even if the eccentric little florist gave him information about floral patterns and symbolism, that meant nothing for his career. His mother couldn’t be blamed as a trigger, since he had been actively avoiding her phone calls since he sent the bouquet. If she didn’t understand the implications, then the action would have been pointless. If she did, Tsukishima didn’t want to listen to her complain. Avoidance was the easiest solution in his opinion.

It was how he dealt with most of his family these days. His father was always irritated with something, mainly his brother, and never was good company. Even if Tsukishima was a highly acclaimed lawyer who had surpassed everyone’s expectations, he knew it meant nothing. All his father cared about was Akiteru and how he had failed their family. The aforementioned older brother had tried to reach out to Tsukishima on a regular basis, though he didn’t answer. It was easier to distance himself from his feelings surrounding the older man if he didn’t speak with him. Occasionally Akiteru would send emails to Tsukishima, updating him on his life and how his wife had been doing. Most times the blonde would skim the information before deleting it and continuing on with his day. Akiteru and his wife were expecting their first child in September, according to the last email sent.

*Maybe he’ll share his birthday with his super smart uncle!* 

For some reason, he left that one in his inbox.

Travelling along the dirt path that led to a familiar workshop, Tsukishima noticed a few voices inside. Quietly the man approached the entrance, keeping his gait slow as he peered into the building. The couple Yamaguchi was currently working with was the quintessential picture of the American dream. They held hands and continued to give each other starry eyed looks that almost made the blond snort. Did they think the happiness of marriage would stay as blissful as their engagement? Had they never heard of a honeymoon period? It was crazy to think something as mundane as a piece of paper could make so many couples this ecstatic. Golden eyes glanced back to Yamaguchi, his frown lessening at the man’s showing of a beautiful arrangement of flowers. Did the young florist ever think about the couples that didn’t stay together? That despite all of the sweat and time he put into his craft, that the couples were simply unfit to be wed? When putting together his bouquets and floral plans, did Yamaguchi ever wonder if it was all for nothing?

Yamaguchi was fully engaged with his conversation, not looking as disastrously dirty as usual. The light green sweater he wore was a little too big for his lean body, making him look younger than he was. A darker green collar popped out from the hem, as well as the ends of the sleeves. It was rare to see the man wear anything but grass stained t-shirts, Tsukishima unaware of another time he had seen him dress this way. His hair still was a mess, with his cowlick proudly sticking straight from the top of his head. But even the shoes were different, and the sudden change caught Tsukishima’s attention. The look was appealing on the young florist, yet for some reason, it rubbed Tsukishima the wrong way. Despite picking on the freckled brunet for his choice of occupation, he couldn’t really think of another job that would better suit him. Being dirty and surrounded with flowers was where he was meant to be.
But their bet could take that away from Yamaguchi, and for the first time the thought left a bad taste the somber lawyer’s mouth.

“Tsukki?” The squeaky voice focused the gaze behind the glasses, Tsukishima noticing the absence of the naive couple from before. Yamaguchi was alone, though his eyes shined with excitement as he made his way toward the lawyer. “I didn’t know you were coming tonight.”

“Should I leave?”

“No!” But after the word left the florist’s mouth, Yamaguchi seemed to remember something and sighed. “Ah, well, maybe. That couple was the last appointment for tonight. I actually have to go see if I can obtain some flowers for a wedding Sunday, so I don’t have much time to hang out.”

“Is it out of town?” Tsukishima questioned, the shorter man giving a nervous laugh before pushing his fingertips together and casting his eyes to the side.

“Sort of. It’s on the edge of town, but it doesn’t take much time to get there. It’s actually my parent’s house.”

“Is that why you’re dressed differently?” At the observation, Yamaguchi’s eyes found Tsukishima’s, curiosity mixing with happiness.

“You noticed?”

“I’m a lawyer; my job is to recognize differences in patterns.” Tsukishima replied, hoping his voice didn’t show his hesitation as he sighed. “So I came here for nothing.”

“Sorry, Tsukki-”

“I might as well make it worth my gas.” The words obviously confused the brunet, Tsukishima pushing his glasses up higher on his face before he answered. “I’ll accompany you on the trip.”
“R-Really?” There was a break in the voice of the florist, making the tall blond lift an eyebrow and wait for him to correct himself. “I mean, it’s not very interesting. They might not even be home. But I wouldn’t mind some company!”

“I came here with the intent to see you, so it’s fine,” the lawyer answered, turning away from the smiling man. Yamaguchi continued to keep his grin while he rushed Tsukishima to his truck, a vehicle that took the blond by surprise initially. It wasn’t what he had expected from the shy man, but logic argued that he’d need a truck to transport his supplies and flowers. Despite the messy needs of his job, Yamaguchi kept the inside of his truck clean, and Tsukishima moved into it without fear of staining his suit. The cost he had pay for his interaction with the sprinklers had been more than enough incentive to keep aware of his surroundings now.

Yamaguchi’s soft music came floating through the radio when the man turned on the car, causing the owner to flush and quickly slam on the mute button. It would have been strange behavior for anyone but Yamaguchi, so Tsukishima simply gazed out the window while the man drove away from the venue. The silence wasn’t uncomfortable for the lawyer, despite his affinity for music. Long nights working in isolation on cases had gotten him accustomed to the relaxing nature of the quiet. Yet he knew from how often the corner of his eye caught Yamaguchi squirming behind the wheel that he was not a fan of silence.

“Uh, Tsukki?” He gave the man credit for lasting until the end of the trip to speak up, the lawyer waiting a few seconds before turning his attention to the florist.

“Hm?”

“I just...my parents are very friendly people. They’re probably going to want to talk a lot, and I don’t ever really bring people over besides the members of ‘Little Crows’ so...they’re not bad! They just really, uh, love people.”

“Ah, so that explains your unrealistic optimism in humanity.” There was a pause between them, Tsukishima wondering if Yamaguchi would take his teasing as an insult. It was normal, as many tended to misjudge the lawyer’s humor for critical assessment. But Yamaguchi’s laughter filled the truck, the florist’s smile never fading as he pulled into a side street. It was obvious that he understood the jest despite the deadpan tone Tsukishima had used. Knowing that the florist was smart enough to differentiate the tease and his serious statements was impressive. Somehow, the freckled man was learning Tsukishima’s style of conversation. And the thought made him smirk with a moment of pride.

“Here we are.” The shop was smaller than Tsukishima had thought it’d be when hearing some stories from Yamaguchi’s childhood. It was quaint and simple, with the apartment sitting snugly above it. As he slowly moved from the truck, Tsukishima scanned the outside, wondering what
Yamaguchi experienced here as a child. It was much smaller and beat down than the large house that Tsukishima grew up in. Long, cold hallways and unused dining room tables had left wide spaces for the lawyer’s empty heart to conform to. But when Yamaguchi told a story about his past, there was never a look of longing or disappointment. Had the flower child never wanted for more? How had he held such positive memories with cramped spaces and lackluster living while Tsukishima struggled to recount moments of happiness as a child? He had lived in a mansion and never went without, and he despised talking of his past. Yet Yamaguchi’s current smile while staring at the shop held nothing but joy.

“Tadashi!” The warm feminine voice caught both men’s attention when entering the store. The woman’s mousy brown hair and scattered freckles gave a hint to where Yamaguchi inherited the traits from, her face chubby and flushed with happiness. Quietly Tsukishima observed the woman as she dropped the basket of roses she had been carrying, rushing to pull the stiff brunet into a hug. “We didn’t expect to see you tonight. What a lovely surprise.”

“Hey mom,” Yamaguchi answered quietly, returning the hug before he took a step back and awkwardly smiled.

“We just came to see if you had any extra jasmine in your shop. I used up most of mine last week, but one of my clients really loves the color.”

“I’m sure we do, but I won’t look until you introduce me to your cute boyfriend.” The words made Tsukishima blink, Yamaguchi’s face matching the forgotten roses as he quickly shook his head.

“T-That’s not--he doe-doesn’t like--he’s just a friend!” The stutters coming from the florist were amusing to Tsukishima, who took a step forward and bowed to the woman.

“Good evening. My name is Tsukishima Kei; your son is working on a wedding I’m attending. I apologize for the intrusion.”

“Oh, you’re so polite!” After a giggle, the shop owner waited until the lawyer moved to full height again to speak. “My name is Yamaguchi Aria, mother to Tadashi. His father, Karo, is in the back just finishing up some paperwork for the night. If we had known you two were on your way here, we would have closed early.”

“We were just coming for a quick visit-” Before Yamaguchi could finish, Aria’s hands were reaching out to grab theirs, the sudden touch taking the blond by surprise.

“You always rush out of her before eating, and I worry you’re working yourself to the bone over
there. You two should stay for dinner; I’ll even make some for you to bring back to your friends at work.”

“Ah, well...I kind of threw this trip on Tsukki unexpectedly, and we didn’t plan to stay long.” The obvious disappointment in Aria’s face had an affect on her son, Tsukishima reading the situation before he shrugged.

“I’ve got time.” Both set of brown eyes flickered over to him, the lawyer sliding his free hand into his pocket.

“I’m also curious to hear some stories of Yamaguchi’s childhood.”

“Tsukki!” But Yamaguchi’s cry was overshadowed by Aria’s smile, the woman not hesitating to pull the two toward the stairs of the shop. She didn’t waste time situating them at the dinner table of the small kitchen, the woman starting her cooking the same time she began her trip down memory lane. Spices and laughter filled the air as Aria spoke, Tsukishima ignoring the silent glances of mercy from Yamaguchi to focus on his mother’s tales. Her memories were enriched in happiness and joy, soothing the younger Yamaguchi’s embarrassment with moments of praise and forehead kisses. Each show of affection shifted something in the lawyer’s chest, though he wasn’t sure what it meant. It didn’t feel good nor did it hurt. The squeeze was slightly uncomfortable, but he kept quiet while watching Aria continue to talk.

Yamaguchi Karo was much quieter than his wife. When entering the kitchen, he took the time to kiss his wife before introducing himself to the newcomer. It only took him a second to realize his wife was delving into their past, the man giving a quiet chuckle before joining the men at the table. He didn’t add much to the story telling, only speaking up when his wife stumbled over a long forgotten name or location. It was strange for Tsukishima to watch the dynamic between the two. Though Aria and Karo were quite different, it didn’t pull away from their relationship. Neither fought for dominance or tried to outdo each other. Even when Karo teased the smaller woman for not being able to reach the ‘good glasses’ on the top shelf, the glare she gave was playful and followed by a giggle. Yamaguchi busied himself with setting up the table for his parents, desperately avoiding the golden eyes of his guest while he clumsily fumbled with arranging Tsukishima’s utensils.

“So when I finally found Tadashi, he had gotten his head stuck inside one of our large display vases and we had to call the fire department to get him out. It took him two hours to stop crying.”

“Yamaguchi wouldn’t go near the store for a month after that,” Karo’s finishing of the story received a groan from Yamaguchi, who ducked his head closer to his plate while shoving a piece of chicken into his mouth. It was obvious that the man was praying for the floor to fall through so he wouldn’t have to deal with the embarrassment of the story. Impulsively, Tsukishima pressed his
elbow into the other man’s side, finally catching the miserable gaze of the florist. The blush that flowered over his skin was charming on the young man, the look of uncertainty proving he wasn’t sure how Tsukishima would judge him now. Tsukishima only held the eye contact for a second before turning back to the parents, though he let his hand drop next to the nervous hand curled around the seat of Yamaguchi’s chair. Their thumbs brushed, nearly overlapping as Tsukishima spoke.

“Thank you for the meal and the entertainment.” He could feel Yamaguchi’s hand tense next to his own, but when the man didn’t pull away from the touch, Tsukishima let his focus return to the smiling woman.

“It was a pleasure to have some company! It’s nice to see Tadashi have such good friends in his life.”

“Though I do feel bad we haven’t asked much about you, Tsukishima-kun.” At Karo’s statement, Yamaguchi perked up, his mood shifting into safer waters.

“Tsukki’s really amazing! He’s a prodigious lawyer and managed to finish his bar exam before almost anyone his age.”

“That’s very impressive!” The genuine look of awe in both parent’s faces felt foreign to Tsukishima, who could only fix his glasses and peer down at his now empty plate in response. Yamaguchi didn’t settle for that, though, and his hand wandered closer to the lawyer’s on his seat while he continued.

“He’s very intelligent and has won several cases for people who couldn’t defend themselves in the divorce court. Last week he was telling me about a case where he was able to prove the father had been discriminated against because he was currently exploring his sexuality with another man. He got the court to reverse the previous judge’s order and the man has a new trial date.” Like they were his own accomplishments, Yamaguchi’s face reflected the emotion in his tone when explaining the story to his parents. And though Tsukishima didn’t expect much of a response, the lawyer was thrown for a loop when Aria reached forward to lay her hand onto the one sitting frozen on the table.

“You did that for someone?”

“It’s just my job,” Tsukishima answered quietly. Still, her eyes were filled with pride as she squeezed the pale hand under hers, her smile identical to the florist sitting next to the stunned lawyer.
“You are a very special man. To have all of those accomplishments under your belt at such a young age is an amazing feat.” Karo gave his two cents quietly, but the small addition to the conversation still impacted Tsukishima. Unsure of why it felt so hard to breathe now, Tsukishima glanced back to the optimistic woman who warmed his hand with her own.

“You parents are lucky to have such a hard-working child to call their son.”

“Th...thank you.” It was hard to force out the words for Tsukishima, whose chest was cramping in discomfort.

Tsukishima didn’t contribute to the conversation after that, the blond thankful for Aria’s natural gift to talk. He offered to help Yamaguchi with the dishes while the older couple retrieved the flowers which they had originally came for, though he didn’t speak during the task. He could tell that Yamaguchi was aware of his shift in personality, and each worried glance his way only increased Tsukishima’s discomfort. His eyes narrowed on the dish he was drying, pressing a little harder than necessary as he thought over the kind words of Yamaguchi’s mother. Why had she been able to so easily accept his accomplishments as something to be praised? If it had been his parents, they would have been silent. There would have been no hand hold or show of affection in his household. He couldn’t remember the last time either parents had complimented him on his achievements in life. Had they ever? After only knowing Tsukishima for a couple hours, Aria and Karo had showered him with unconditional love. It was a whole new experience for the lawyer, and he wasn’t sure how to feel about it.

“Make sure to tell the others we send our love!” He also didn’t know how to handle the embrace Aria gave him and Yamaguchi when they were leaving, the sudden rush of intimacy leaving his mouth dry and his eyes itchy. Karo settled for a simple handshake, though the offer for the lawyer to stop by anytime was just as impactful. Yamaguchi’s parents stood holding hands as they waved to the two walking back to the truck. Flowers filled Yamaguchi’s arms, while Tsukishima was tasked with carrying the Tupperware filled with meals for the ‘Little Crows’ crew. He was silent when placing the food in the backseat, keeping to the trend when Yamaguchi drove the two home. Again he felt the florist watching him, the silent glances rubbing his splintering stability the wrong way. He knew that the brunet had something he wanted to say. So when the two pulled into the parking lot of the venue, his spine tensed at the forced laugh from Yamaguchi.

“I’m sorry we had to stay for dinner.”

“...It’s fine,” Tsukishima dismissed, scowl tugging at his lips when Yamaguchi continued.

“I knew that we’d get back pretty late if we did, and my mother can be very persistent.”
“Hm.”

“And I meant it when I said she loves to talk. She’s always been the type to hold up the mailman just to tell him about some story involving me or dad.” Tsukishima’s eyes narrowed on the dashboard when Yamaguchi paused, an unpleasant feeling rising in his throat at the tension in the air. “And I’m sorry-”

“Do you ever shut up?” There was an edge to his voice that he hadn’t used with the florist, the obvious shock showing in Yamaguchi’s face as Tsukishima scoffed. “You shouldn’t have said anything about my career to them. It wasn’t your business to tell.”

“I didn’t mean to embarrass you,” Yamaguchi answered instantly, Tsukishima grimacing before he shoved his door open.

“Like I worry about what someone says to people I’ll never see again.” He was out of the truck in a second, not turning back when hearing Yamaguchi’s door open and shut quickly.

“You...must be really mad at me to say something so mean-”

“To be mad would mean I cared about you or your opinion.” His scathing comment came out with anger and frustration lurking beneath it, though both feelings evaporated when hearing a sudden gasp from the trailing florist. His stomach sucked in at the painful noise, a sharp breath shaking his lungs before he silently turned back to face Yamaguchi. The freckled man had stopped moving after him, a hand fisted over his chest while his other balled tightly against his side. Despite the attempt to keep his lips straight, Tsukishima could see the waver in Yamaguchi’s composure, the florist dropping his head to hide his face.

“Ah, ri-right.” His voice was soft and weaker than normal. The change in the man’s body language made Tsukishima wince, though the lawyer provided no response. The silence lingered between them for some time, neither seeming to know how to break it. Tsukishima could leave; his keys were poking into his thigh and his car was only a few feet away. It would be what he would do under any other circumstance. Yet as he stared at the drooping cowlick in front of him, the blond’s feet were frozen. He wanted Yamaguchi to get mad, to yell at him and demand for him to take back his words. Words that for once, the stoic man had no intention to say.

But the silence between them wasn’t broken like that. Instead, the rumble of an engine and a blinding light appeared, the sight of a motorcycle coming into the parking lot ending the quiet moment. The scowl that etched into Tsukishima’s mouth was instant when seeing the messy bed hair pop out from under the helmet, Kuroo shutting off his motorcycle before he peeked up at the
two men.

“Yo.” His one word made Yamaguchi’s head shoot up, the florist turning away from Tsukishima to wave at his co-worker.

“Kuroo-san! Good evening.”

“Hey flower child, what are you doing here so late?” Kuroo’s grin was relaxed as he moved over to the two, though it slipped off its perch when a strained laugh was given by Yamaguchi.

“My mom told me to bring dinner for everyone. I’m going to go give some to Suga-san now; can you bring these flowers to my warehouse?”

“Uh, sure,” Kuroo answered, Yamaguchi already rushing to his backseat before the photographer could answer. The tupperware was gathered into his grasp quickly, Yamaguchi nearly running straight into the still stagnant lawyer. Not lifting his gaze to meet Tsukishima, the smaller man bowed slightly.

“Sorry, Tsukishima-san.”

“Yamaguchi-” But before the lawyer could continue, Yamaguchi cut him off.

“Please drive home safe!” And then he was gone, quick to leave the two taller men in the parking lot. Gold eyes followed the motion of the florist, Tsukishima clenching his teeth behind closed lips at the sudden departure. It was obvious his words had wounded the florist, and just as he had done with Oikawa, Yamaguchi was running away. Running from him. Not because he was embarrassed, but because Tsukishima had hurt him. The fact that the information tugged at his stomach in an unpleasant way was confusing to Tsukishima, who didn’t have to think it over long before a low whistle caught his attention.

“Tsukishima-san? Man, he sure wanted to get away from you.” Trying to send a heavy glare at the older man now holding the flowers, Tsukishima couldn’t deny the obvious truth in his statement. Seeming to recognize this, Kuroo continued. “What happened, Romeo?”

“Nothing,” Tsukishima snapped out, disliking the slight shrug Kuroo gave in reply.
“Nothing sure looks like it hurt. Hope you know what you’re doing, Tsukki, before you push him too far away to get him back.” Kuroo casually walked past the silent lawyer, his hum low as he moved toward the back of the venue. Tsukishima’s eyes glared down at his feet, getting them to finally move. But even as he drove away from the wedding venue, he couldn’t shake the image of Yamaguchi’s pained face from his mind.

Never before had hearing his full name hurt him as it had tonight.

Chapter End Notes

....Yay for KageHina? One out of two couples isn't bad, right? Ahhhh Tsukki is such a meanie! And Yams doesn't deserve this. So, will Hinata ever be able to face the truth of his feelings? What about Tsukishima? Will the laywer and florist's blooming relationship wither under the pressure? And who will come to our flower child's rescue next time? Kudos and comments would be lovely!

Next Chapter: The Breakdown and the Breakthrough
The Breakdown and the Breakthrough

Chapter Summary

Kenma faces a familiar foe, and Oikawa's beat at his own game.

Chapter Notes

Helllllllo my friends! So this chapter would have been up earlier, but my computer kind of has a GIANT crack in the monitor and now I'm waiting for a new screen. I was able to work around the black mass of darkness, but it took some time. So please, enjoy this chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Just tilt your head a little closer to his, okay?” Kuroo’s gentle voice never gave the hint that he was in control of the photo shoot. No matter the difficulty of the couple, Kuroo’s requests and relaxed nature made them willing to listen with no resistance. For years, Kenma had watched him use this same tactic with friends, teachers, and family. He had been known to try it on Kenma, though the editor was quite good at turning it down. Still, even he could get swept up by the charming man now lifting the camera to snap another picture.

The couple that they were working with had a different love story than most. Both were baseball fans for rival teams. They met at a series in which both teams were competing, their seats next to each other in the stadium. Throughout the game the two had argued, refusing to admit their team was inferior. Despite the fights, the two couldn’t deny the attraction that was rising as quick as the pitch count. During the seventh inning stretch, the groom had proposed a deal; whoever’s team won would get taken out to dinner by the loser. Neither would agree on the result of the game, each claiming their own team won. But there was a dinner had, and four years of competition had not taken anything away from their love. Even now, as the two wore differing jerseys while sharing a kiss, it was obvious they were happily in love.

Kenma let his eyes glance up at the sunny Monday sky shining down on them before resting deeper in the shade of the dugout. His DS was at his side, lacking battery from their long trip. The photo shoot was being done in the city, which took an hour by train just to get to. The two decided to take the train instead of Kuroo’s bike, knowing that the daytime heat would make the ride uncomfortable. This was the first photo shoot since the bad night of seafood that Kenma had been allowed to go on-site with Kuroo. He had been feeling up to the task since Saturday, yet Kuroo’s overprotective nature refused to listen. He had been sick for two days, and the photographer had stayed by his side for the entire experience. Little Crows refused to sit idly by, either; Yamaguchi brought Kenma’s favorite flowers (Cattleya Orchids) as a get well gift. Kageyama took care of feeding Kenma, as Kuroo was still quite useless in the kitchen. The sappy romance movies were
contributed by Oikawa, seeming to enjoy torturing Kuroo with his choices. And Suga pulled his normal magic, fixing all their schedules to meet Kenma’s need.

But Kuroo was the one who took the lead in his care. When he couldn’t keep down the small meals, Kuroo rubbed his back and comforted him. He didn’t complain about Kenma’s lack of motivation to leave his room. Kuroo even slept in Kenma’s bed, lulling the feverish man to sleep by stroking his hair. The situation felt surreal. When people dedicated that much time to another’s recovery, it was normally their wife. Yet Kuroo didn’t seem to mind coddling Kenma, and the editor wasn’t sure what to think of that information.

“That was great; I got a lot of unique pictures.” Kuroo’s voice started to move closer to Kenma, the blond lifting his head to see the taller man leading the couple his way. “We’ll be able to have these ready for you to look at for...Thursday?”

“Wednesday,” Kenma corrected, awkwardly looking away as he brushed his hair behind his ear. Kuroo took the spotlight off of him easily, giving a charming smile to the couple.

“Wednesday it is. Just come by Suga’s office and let him know which ones you’ve picked for your engagement photo.”

“Thank you for coming out here to do these pictures. This stadium really means allot to us.” The bride’s eyes were filled with excitement as she glanced around the stadium, her hand squeezing her fiance’s. “It is home to the best team, after all.”

“The standings say otherwise,” The groom teased, his laugh hearty before pressing his free hand to his wife’s belly. “And when our little boy grows up, he’ll know for sure just how great his daddy’s team is.”

“Keep dreaming,” she answered, her pretty blue eyes turning back to the photographer. “But honestly, thank you again for being so accommodating for me.”

“We’ll do anything to help our customers, especially ones who may be holding the next big slugger.” The wink from Kuroo was casual yet didn’t hold a hint of sexual undertone or unprofessionalism. Kenma quietly trailed behind Kuroo as they walked the pair to the gate of the park, waving while exchanging pleasant goodbyes. The two then returned to the field, starting to clean up Kuroo’s camera supplies.
“There’s a train that will come in around 1pm. If we leave the park in the next fifteen minutes, we
could make it there with time to spare.” Kenma’s eyes looked over the train schedule on his phone,
Kuroo letting out a low sigh before he pulled his backpack onto his shoulders.

“When’s the next one?” The strange question only faltered the editor for a moment, the blonde
quietly sliding his finger down the screen.

“There’s a train at 2pm, but then there isn’t another one until 5:30pm.”

“That’s the one we want.” Now Kenma did give pause, lifting his head to see Kuroo’s charming
smile. “Get us two tickets for the 5:30 train, okay? I’d do it, but you’ve already got the page open.”

“Why aren’t we picking an earlier train?” Kenma asked, staying in his crouched position on the
ground.

“I think it’d be a waste to come out to the city and not explore it. We’ve never spent a whole day
here, and we don’t have any other clients. I was doing some research when I heard we were
coming out here; did you know there’s a zoo about ten minutes away? I bet we could-.”

“So that was your plan,” Kenma said, giving a weak frown when his best friend laughed.

“Ah, caught me. You know I’m a sucker for zoos.” Kenma did know that fact, as Kuroo’s love of
animals had been a staple in his life. It didn’t surprise him that Kuroo’s plan revolved around going
to the zoo. Despite his mature look, Kuroo was a child at heart. Slowly pushing to stand, Kenma
gave a quiet shrug and barely nodded his head.

“I’ll buy them on the way there.” An arm was dropped over Kenma’s shoulder, Kuroo yanking the
surprised man closer and lowering his nose to nuzzle in Kenma’s hair.

“You’re the best.” Kenma wanted to argue, remembering how much work the taller man had put
into taking care of him. Even though the zoo would have more people than Kenma felt comfortable
being around, he couldn’t turn Kuroo down. The photographer had canceled his plans with
Bokuto’s friend, skipping a concert he was looking forward to just to keep an eye on Kenma. The
sacrifice was made without a second thought. The least Kenma could do was stomach a few hours
in public to please his best friend. Ignoring the slight nerves rumbling in his mind, Kenma looked
up the directions to the zoo.
True to Kuroo’s word, the wildlife sanctuary wasn’t far. Getting in had been simple, most families were in school or working on the sunny afternoon. The lack of people at the entrance eased some of Kenma’s tension. Some of the more popular exhibits were crowded, Kenma hesitating to follow his friend into the fray. Each time his arm would brush against a stranger, the editor would freeze in panic. He waited for the person to scream at him or to question why Kenma was so klutzy. Most simply gave an apology and went on their way, not bothering to look back at the blond. Yet that didn’t settle the nerves inside the smaller man; it simply made his expectation for an attack rise. Kuroo, to his credit, kept close to the quiet man. When talking about the different animals, Kuroo’s arm rested around the back of Kenma, allowing Kenma to bury into his side for protection. Having the extra feeling of security allowed moments of fun to shine through, Kenma smiling at Kuroo’s lively descriptions of tigers and polar bears.

It was just before three when their stomachs grumbled and the two decided a lunch break was needed. The later time of day in the zoo meant some schools had been dismissed, the foot traffic of the area growing in density. Kenma tried not to notice the increase of crowd as the two walked toward the restaurant, looking at the menu outside of the entrance.

“Do you want the chicken fingers?” Kuroo’s suggestion received a nod, Kenma only half listening to the question. His eyes flickered to the people rushing past them, flinching when a set of kids swiped the side of his shirt. Concerned by the movement, Kuroo peered down to his friend, a gentler tone coming from his mouth. “You okay?”

“Fine,” Kenma whispered, his stomach fluttering as he heard the worried tone. If Kuroo thought he wasn’t alright, he would cancel the trip. They hadn’t been able to see the whole zoo yet, and their train was still two hours away. An anxious Kenma would ruin Kuroo’s trip in the city. And even if he didn’t say it, Kenma was sure his friend would be disappointed. How many times could the photographer deal with Kenma’s anxiety ruining their plans before he finally had enough? A small voice tried to break through the panic, reminding the editor that Kuroo had never left before. The words were drowned out, though, and the blond took a quick breath before pushing away from Kuroo. “I’ll find a seat if you go order the food.”

“Works for me. I’ll come find you, okay?” Waiting for an affirmative nod from Kenma, Kuroo moved toward the ordering window, leaving Kenma to try and collect himself. The editor tried to focus on his breathing, remembering his therapist’s words. His emotions manifested into physical reactions and created his sudden bursts of anxiety. So long as he could keep his composure, Kenma would be fine. Yet each time he tried to focus on his inhales, the sound of loud chatter or screaming children would break his concentration. Three weak attempts to breathe failed, and Kenma felt the need to find a table take over his mind. Maybe if he could focus on that, his anxiety would stay manageable.

The second he stepped into the dining area, he knew he had made a mistake. Filled to the brim with people, Kenma’s breath escaped him. It was impossible to focus on his mission when he nearly ran into someone upon entering the building. The rows of people that lined the tables gave little options for Kenma to choose from. Random single seats were open, and though some weren’t far
apart, the distance was too much for Kenma to handle. Overwhelmed by the sight, Kenma felt his throat dry when a few pairs of eyes lifted from their meal to glance at him. They only lingered a second, maybe looking for a friend to return with food, but it was enough to trigger the negative thoughts. Did they think he was weird, standing alone? They probably assumed nobody would want to be friends with a quiet man like him. And why would they? Kenma wasn’t a sociable guy who liked parties and being out with friends. He didn’t have appeal like Suga, or the looks of Oikawa. Kenma was just a short, strange person who-

“Kitten.” A soft call of his familiar nickname snagged Kenma’s attention from the encroaching sickly thoughts.

“I-!” Eyes wide and unfocused, Kenma felt something warm slip into his hand, his immediate reaction to pull away. The grip didn’t release, familiar fingers linking between his own before pulling him from the busy area. Black hair swayed in front of him as Kuroo led Kenma away, the two finding shade under a nearby tree. Kenma only caught a glimpse of the bagged food dropping to the bench beside them before he was swept into a hug.

“I’ve got you.” The warmth was comforting and eased the bouncing nerves inside his stomach, Kenma’s rapid breathing starting to slow in response. One small hand reached up to snag the back of Kuroo’s t-shirt, Kenma’s forehead dropping to the chest in front of him. It took a few minutes for his body to relax, the thunderous heartbeat and lack of breath releasing their hold on Kenma’s panicking mind. The hug didn’t lessen throughout the calm down, Kuroo’s scent easing some of the erratic thoughts. But as Kenma’s anxiety started to wane, the embarrassment rose without permission. He hadn’t had a panic attack like this in years. And of all the days, why did it have to be the one that meant something to Kuroo?

“I’m okay now.” Kenma emphasized his point with a small tug on the back of Kuroo’s shirt, though the hug didn’t release. Feeling guilt swell in his ribs, Kenma peeked up from his resting spot, hoping to catch the eye of his friend. “You don’t...have to keep holding me.”

“Why didn’t you tell me you were feeling overwhelmed?” Finally, Kuroo leaned away, but only enough for the photographer to catch the gaze of his quiet counterpart. Feeling self-conscious at the strong gaze being aimed directly at him, Kenma squirmed in his spot and shrugged.

“I didn’t want to ruin your trip to the zoo, but....” He was sure that he had done that exact thing. How could Kuroo enjoy the rest of the day when he had to deal with Kenma’s anxious nature? The predicted aggravation was missing from Kuroo’s smile, the taller man simply shaking his head before replying.

“I’ve had lots of fun. And spending it with you made it even better. The fact that you were able to progress this far is amazing. You’ve really outdone yourself, kitten.” The compliment made
Kenma blush, his eyes downcast as his friend laughed. “If I had known it was so busy in there, I would have suggested eating out here. We can use this bench, too. Way better than that cramped place, right?”

“Maybe,” Kenma answered quietly, Kuroo stepping back in order to drop his butt onto the bench. Yanking open the bag of food, the photographer busied himself with separating their food while he hummed. Kenma didn’t sit, his attention staying on the concentrated face of the photographer. Even if Kuroo enjoyed teasing his friends, he was truly a nice person. He never made fun of people for their weakness and praised the small accomplishments they made. He was the first to pass the spotlight onto another person, and the last to think of himself. He made Kenma’s anxiety feel like a mountain to conquer instead of a crippling drawback. Never once did he think of the editor as a victim. The optimistic view he had made it easier for Kenma to take chances and grow as a person. Without the dark haired man by his side, Kenma wouldn’t have made it this far.

“I got you honey mustard for dipping sauce. We both know you won’t eat without it.” Kuroo’s lopsided grin gave a handsome edge to the man’s face. For once, the heavy thud in Kenma’s chest didn’t make the editor flinch. Instead, the smaller man stepped forward, his blond hair swaying when he bent down into Kuroo’s personal space. Small lips pressed to the soft skin of Kuroo’s cheek, Kenma instantly looked toward the gaping mouth of his older friend. Never before had Kuroo reacted with such honest shock. His cheeks were tickled pink, which made a twitch of a smile pull at Kenma’s lips. Kuroo was an attractive man, which meant he had been around the block a time or two. He was no stranger to intimacy. So the sight of his suave friend being rendered speechless because of a peck on the cheek made Kenma happy. Trying to keep his passive expression, Kenma casually sat next to his food, his fingers snagging the honey mustard still resting in Kuroo’s palm.

“Thank you.” For the dressing or for always being there for him, Kenma wasn’t sure. Maybe both. It didn’t matter; the soft words from the blond finally shook Kuroo from his daze, who kept a bright smile on his face for the rest of lunch. Kenma stayed on the quiet side while his roommate chatted, but it wasn’t uncomfortable. He liked to listen to his friend ramble about his favorite parts of the park and which animals he still wanted to see. By the time the meal was done, Kenma was committed to continuing their exploration of the zoo. Any remaining traces of nerves dissipated when Kuroo’s hand grabbed his own, the photographer giving his signature smile while pulling Kenma closer to him.

“If you get too nervous, just give my hand a squeeze.”

“Okay,” Kenma consented quietly, allowing his hand to stay in the sweaty larger palm. The connection alone seemed to protect from the toxic thoughts, and Kenma enjoyed the remaining time spent at the zoo. He wondered while watching Kuroo make childish faces at the gorilla behind the glass, if holding this hand could give him the power to accept his anxiety a little easier.
If Kuroo didn’t see it as a problem, then maybe Kenma could learn to be happy with it, too.

~**~

“Now before I begin, do any of you know a single thing about dance?” Oikawa’s sweet tone didn’t disperse the tension in the ballroom, his brown eyes scanning the wedding party arranged in front of him. None looking comfortable with the question, the only man who raised his hand was Ennoshita, who let out a quiet sigh when all eyes turned to him.

“My sister’s a ballroom dancer and I help her practice at home during my breaks.” The student’s explanation seemed to satisfy Oikawa, who beckoned him away from his group. The tailor had Ennoshita stand between Kuroo and Kageyama, though they weren’t the only members of "Little Crows" to be there. Suga and Yamaguchi stood on the other side of Oikawa, waiting for directions from their dramatic leader. Despite Oikawa being the only crow with training, all of the employees were able to assist in ballroom dancing. Even Kenma, who had been excused from the exercise because of the work he needed to catch up on, could begrudgingly demonstrate the steps for a waltz. Weddings were shying away from the formalities of dancing, yet Oikawa was always willing to toss in a free lesson if the bride or groom so desired. With larger groups, it was hard for only one man to teach, so the tailor “persuaded” (or blackmailed in Kageyama’s case) the team to learn some steps as well. It was rare he asked for their assistance, but the lack of women in the group called for some extra hands.

“Well, then this lesson should be a walk in the park for you.” A simple wink from Oikawa had Ennoshita glancing away awkwardly, the tailor smirking and turning his attention back to the men across the room. “As for the rest of our wedding party, I’ll be assigning you a partner to work with for our class. We won’t be going over something complicated, just simple movements and steps you can take when slow dancing with a beautiful woman or dashing stud.”

“If we don’t dance, can we leave?” Tsukishima’s dry question showed his lack of desire to be in the room, though Oikawa easily ignored it to continue his instructions.

“Our first pairing is obviously our two grooms.” At the curling of the assistant’s finger, Asahi and Noya emerged from their group to step into the middle of the room. While the instant attention made the taller man cringe, Noya bobbed on his feet in excitement. Oikawa gave a bright smile at the two, feeling completely in his element. “You two will be the stars of the show, so we need to make sure you flow nicely together.”

“Right!” Noya chirped out, Asahi glancing away with a soft nod.
“Thank you for your help.”

“It’s my pleasure, obviously. I mean, it’s not every day I get to show off my amazing dancing skills.” Then Oikawa turned toward his boss, giving a pointed look. “Suga-kun, I’ll be pairing you with Daichi.”

“Me?” The best man gave a slow blink as Oikawa nodded, his face showing how obvious he thought the choice was.

“You two are too pathetic to separate. Even if I did, I’m sure you’d be making googly eyes at each other across the room.” The honest answer had both men red in seconds, though neither protested his claim. Oikawa simply rolled his eyes at the reaction, his hands pressing to either side of his hips. “Now that you two are happily paired, I should make sure the other best man is taken care of.”

“I’ll work with Tanaka.” The psychology student caught the assistant’s attention, droopy eyes showing little excitement over his offer. “He’s not the best student out there and he tends to get overexcited when learning new things. Last time I asked him to help with my sister’s recital he nearly broke her toe with his two left feet. It’s just easier this way.”

“That was so long ago!” The mechanic’s loud protest was overshadowed by Noya’s snickering, Ennoshita giving a pointed stare at the bald man.

“It was in February.”

“Three months can change a man.” The serious expression on Tanaka’s face would have been intimidating if not for the ridiculous subject at hand. Ennoshita gave a weak sigh, showing how often he dealt with the craziness of Tanaka before he snagged his bicep and dragged him to the side of the room.

“Well now that the bald one is contained, I’ll be pairing up chibi-kun next.” Oikawa’s words made Hinata perk up in his group, seeming eager to take on the challenge.

“Alright! I’m going to be the best dancer there is out there!”

“It’s not a competition, dumbass.” Kageyama’s snappy words made Hinata huff, sending the
irritated baker a defiant look.

“You’re just saying that because you don’t want me to do better than you.”

“As if someone as uncoordinated as you could dance.”

“Bakayama-”

“Chibi-kun will be dancing with our favorite little flower child.” Oikawa’s sweet words split the two, both arguing men turning to face the assistant. With a lean arm around the florist’s shoulders, Oikawa tilted his head and spoke through a smile. “I aim to please my little co-workers, after all.”

“He asked for me?” Hinata’s words were filled with the same confusion the rest of the room felt, though Yamaguchi simply looked toward the window at the question.

“Technically he implemented ‘Code Burgundy’, but didn’t specify who he wanted to be with.”

“Oh my god.” The tailor heard Suga mutter, pressing his hands into his face at the familiar code talk. Daichi had seemed amused when he arched an eyebrow toward Suga, the wedding planner refusing to answer the unspoken question. Instead, his hazel stare moved back onto Oikawa, his voice slipping through a forced smile. “Tooru, let's focus on the task at hand.”

“Fine, fine.” Oikawa pushed Yamaguchi toward the energetic teacher, Hinata giving his signature smile at the nervous florist.

“This is going to be so much fun! Way better than having to deal with that annoying jerk.” Yet even as Hinata spat his insult, a hesitant gaze toward the baker showed he wasn’t as relieved as he portrayed. The tint of curiosity, or maybe longing, flickered in his face before turning back to his dance partner. Yamaguchi himself looked out of sorts, a smile that boarded on fake plastered to his lips. The opposite could be said for a particular lawyer, the scowl evident as he sent a scathing glare toward the assistant.

“Code Burgundy?” The tone of disdain in Tsukishima’s voice implied he didn’t enjoy the secrecy. Despite an aura that would unease a Spartan, Oikawa shrugged the intimidating look away.
“It’s a need-to-know basis.” The dismissive tone he used made the blonde’s eyebrow twitch, though he was too proud to argue with the assistant. To make another retort would show he cared, and it was obvious to the brunet that the tall lawyer had no interest in exposing his hand. But to the tailor, it was obvious what Tsukishima was feeling.

Oikawa was a little surprised when Yamaguchi visited his office before the lesson with a troubled look and fidgety hands, asking for a special request. Though he wanted to help with the dance lesson, he didn’t want to be paired with Tsukishima. For the boy who got along with anything short of a serial killer, the request was rare. The small wince that had accompanied the request had displeased Oikawa. Though he tended to push the teasing envelope with his co-workers, it was never to hurt. He was still thinking of a way to repay the florist for his childish comment at the tuxedo alterations. Suga was the mama crow, sure, but Oikawa wasn’t known for laying down without a fight. He may not have known what had transpired between the two, but he was quite sure the little flower needed his protection.

And maybe a little revenge.

“But do not fret, my friend, because Tobio-kun will be a great match for you.” The moment the words left his mouth, a communal burst of laughter sprouted from Noya, Tanaka, and Hinata’s mouths. Even Yamaguchi’s lips tweaked into a smile, though he kept his laughter silent at the sturdy voice of the best man.

“Enough laughing, we’re all stepping out of our comfort zone.” Yet even as Daichi scolded them, the men continued with their unfiltered snickers. The two men in question were matching in their displeased looks, Tsukishima being the first to speak.

“I refuse.”

“I can’t dance with him.” Kageyama’s protest supported the lawyer, neither seeming willing to budge in their choice. There was a moment where their eyes met, golden eyes instantly narrowing.

“The problem here isn’t me; I don’t intend to waste my time with someone as inadequate as you.”

“What did you say?” There was a narrowed gleam to Kageyama’s eyes, showing his displeasure with the lawyer’s statement. Before the heated conversation could turn ugly, Daichi appeared between the two, his hands resting on their shoulders.
“Last time I checked, there were no children in this wedding party. So I’d advise you two to stop acting like toddlers.” Daichi’s words weren’t presented as a threat, yet the warning was still clear as day. Tsukishima sighed and looked toward the ground, quietly accepting the order from the older man. Kageyama had less experience with the officer but still seemed uneasy with the situation. Before he could voice this, a cheerful voice entered the conversation.

“It kind of fits for you two to be together since you’re both really tall.” Then with a grin that couldn’t be dampened, Hinata kept his bright eyes on Kageyama. “Even though I still don’t think you can dance.”

“I’m telling you, I can!”

“Then let’s get this show on the road. If you can teach Stingyshima to dance, I’ll buy you dinner. Deal?” The stare between the two was short lived before Kageyama scoffed, his frown lacking any pleasure when turning toward the lawyer.

“Fine.” It wasn’t hard to notice the shade of pink dusting the baker’s cheeks, Oikawa seeming pleased with the agreement before moving to his iPod. A few clicks made the classy music flow from the speakers, signaling the Little Crows to begin the lesson. Oikawa spun around on his heels, turning his attention to Kuroo.

“You’ll be my floater for this lesson; work with Asahi and Noya most of the time, but if you see one of our pairs struggling, I’m trusting you to show them a thing or two.”

“Aye aye, captain.” Kuroo’s smile was slow as he used two fingers to salute his co-worker, the photographer stepping toward the center of the dance floor. The tailor made sure to ruffle the already messy black hair before humming in contentment, brown eyes falling on the amusing couples on the dance floor.

“You may all begin!”

And for the most part, the lesson went well. Oikawa didn’t expect Daichi to do well with the waltz, and the officer was living up to his dismal expectations. Suga’s smile showed he didn’t mind the sloppy movements, their fingers finding each other like they were meant to be intertwined. Blushes were easy to spot as goofy smiles tugged at the pair’s lips, Daichi hesitating for only a moment before stepping closer to the wedding planner. Their aura screamed fate, making Oikawa roll his eyes and turn away.
“Hips stay still here, Ryuu.” The flat voice showed no mercy as Ennoshita stepped into the mechanic’s space, his softer hands pressing down onto his taller partner’s hips. “If I have to tell you that again-”

“You won’t, promise!” Yet the sneaky grin on the bald man’s face showed he was up to no good. The psychology student’s sigh was barely heard over the music, proving he was more like the mama crow that Oikawa previously thought. It was amusing to watch Tanaka mess up minutes after the critique, and the tailor wondered if the obnoxious man simply enjoyed his friend’s fingers on his waist.

“That’s...that’s good, Shouyou. I think you finally got it.” Yamaguchi’s praise tugged on the assistant’s ear, a bemused feeling swelling in his lean chest when seeing the chibi teacher jump into the air.

“Wah, you really think so?! Let’s do it again!” Yamaguchi didn’t seem to expect Hinata’s grasp of his hands, yanking him off balance to try and engage in the dance steps again. The florist managed to give off a nervous laugh as he regained composure, eyes flickering away from the bright stare now locked on his face.

“Ah, but you’ve already got the steps down.”

“Yeah, but I don’t want to forget and look like those two.” A point over the brunet’s shoulder was aimed to the grumpy baker, whose equally annoyed partner looked beyond uncomfortable with their situation.

“If I wanted to learn from a robot, I could have watched a tutorial online.”

“Do you ever shut up?” Kageyama snapped out, the lawyer simply smirking with the knowledge of getting under his partner’s skin. Before the conversation could escalate, Oikawa watched Kuroo step in, seeming to try and keep the peace. Though Kageyama was relieved for the help, Tsukishima seemed to bristle at the photographer’s teasing grin. Oikawa couldn’t hear the words that were exchanged, but if he knew Kuroo as well as he did, it wasn’t meant to still the waters of the blonde. From how shaken up their little florist had been when asking Oikawa for his request, the assistant couldn’t feel a shred of sympathy in regards to the lawyer. Let him suffer; maybe it would smarten him up.

Finally, Oikawa’s eyes fell on the final man left without a partner. The cop with spiky hair seemed less amused, crossing his arms and giving a warning look as Oikawa practically skipped over to him.
"What are you looking at?"

"My partner, obviously."

"I’ll pass."

"No need to be shy." Oikawa’s hand reached out to grab the officer’s arm, gently tugging the shorter man closer to him. The annoyed look didn’t drop from Iwaizumi’s face, though he did lower his arms when slender fingers ran over them. “You won’t find a better teacher than me, you know. Some like to say I’m a sin to watch.”

"You’re a pain in the ass," Iwaizumi grumbled, giving a soft grunt when Oikawa slid against his body. Lean arms wrapped around the back of Iwaizumi’s neck, eliminating the space between their chests. Fully flushed against each other, Oikawa smirked, letting his fingers climb the back of the officer’s neck.

"Don’t be so mean, Iwa-chan. I’ve been wanting to dance with you since we first met.” The music was meant for proper dance squares, but Oikawa’s sensual roll of his hips proved he didn’t have the waltz on his mind. Then again, his mother always had a sexual flair to each of her steps. To prove he had inherited her skill, Oikawa swayed his hips, enticing the now stiff officer to follow his teasing beat. “No need to be shy; I’m sure you’re quite good with your body.”

"I don’t dance.” The words were spat out like bad food, but the assistant could feel the skin warming against his own. Grinning at the small victory, Oikawa gave a slight tug to the hair under his grasp, practically purring his next words against Iwaizumi’s ear.

"Not all dance is formal. I actually prefer close dancing, with the right partner. And I think you’re perfect for me.” The shiver that rolled through the officer’s body was instant, two heavy hands surprising the tailor when they grasped onto Oikawa’s moving hips.

"Yeah?” But when the brunet was pulled closer instead of away, he gasped in pleasure. Iwaizumi’s body was firm in every sense of the word. Though Tooru knew he was in great shape, it paled in comparison to Iwaizumi. His arms were built to rip trees from the ground, effortlessly holding Oikawa’s weight against his body with no hint of a strain. One hand palmed the back of Oikawa’s thigh, raising the pliant leg snug to his own waist. Thighs were parted and firm under the assistant’s own, Oikawa unsure how he had ended up hoisted off his feet. The movement made their stomachs brush, the assistant feeling his breath hitch at the firm muscles pressing into his
own. A rush of warmth rushed through his blood, body taut against the officer’s own.

“I-Iwa-chan-”

“I never said I couldn’t dance.” The words were low against the side of his jaw, leaving Oikawa’s eyes wide and mouth parted in shock. It was rare that he was overwhelmed by another person, especially one he had been sure he had figured out. But the sudden show of power from Iwaizumi sunk deep into Oikawa’s skin, making him lose focus on anything but the steady breathing of the chest pressed into his own. A hand to the underside of his jaw had Oikawa’s head turning, the stunned tailor catching the amused gleam in Iwaizumi’s olive eyes. Their breaths mingled in the barely there space between their mouths, and never before had Oikawa been so tempted to ravage a man that had turned his own game against him.

“Not to be the wet blanket on your steamy moment-” The low tone of a familiar photographer had Oikawa tilting his head toward his right, locking eyes on the lackadaisical man. “But it’s almost time to wrap this lesson up, and Kageyama looks ready to pop Tsukki’s head off. I’d intervene, but I’m not the best with blood.”

“So go get their parents,” Oikawa hissed out, aiming a sharp nod of his chin in Suga and Daichi’s direction. The assistant felt his body moving without his consent again, though he was displeased to discover it was Iwaizumi pushing him back to his feet.

“Nah, it’s okay; I’ve got them. Thanks for giving us the heads up, Kuroo.” The steaming brunet was ready to explain exactly why it wasn’t okay, but his words stalled when Iwaizumi peeked over his shoulder. “You working after this? Tomorrow’s my day off, so I don’t have to rush out of here tonight.”

“Are you asking me on a date?” Oikawa’s natural charm came flooding back when the officer snorted, the tailor dramatically twirling his finger in a lock of his hair. “I’m flattered, Iwa-chan.”

“I just want to hang out, dumbass. Don’t get any weird ideas in that useless head of yours.” Then with a roll of his eyes, Iwaizumi turned back toward the previously mentioned pairing. “I’ve got to go deal with these idiots. If you’re free tonight, meet me in the parking lot in ten minutes.”

“I guess I can do that.” Oikawa gave a loud sigh after his comment, hoping it masked the weird jump in his chest at the invitation. Iwaizumi didn’t respond verbally, but a slight head nod gave the impression that the man had heard Tooru’s answer before he walked away.
He was used to being asked to meet with clients, especially the ones that he had actively been pursuing sexual endeavors. Some of those clients liked to call their time ‘hanging out’, though it was never quite innocent once their clothing hit the floor. Yet as he watched the officer wrangle his energetic bunch off the dance floor with loud shouts and intimidating threats, Oikawa was sure that this occasion wasn’t normal. He had a feeling that Iwaizumi wasn’t trying to get into his pants; the man really wanted to hang out. The thought was so foreign to the assistant, that he couldn’t understand the weird feelings circulating through his stomach as he walked out the front door of the venue minutes later. It was a troubling feeling, and he the sudden desire to escape the rising uneasiness peaked when catching sight of the lone man still occupying the parking lot.

“Don’t they teach you in cop school that someone hanging out in a deserted parking lot at night should never be trusted?” Oikawa waited for Iwaizumi’s head to turn toward him before the assistant lifted a peace sign next to his head, winking. “I’m ready for our date!”

“It’s not a date.” Stuffing his hands into his jeans pockets before scowling, Iwaizumi tilted his head toward the back of the venue. “You guys got a beach here, right? Show me it.”

“So pushy, Iwa-chan.” Yet even as he teased, Oikawa turned toward the path which led to the requested area. Iwaizumi was quick to follow, the two falling into a similar pace while walking around the venue’s grounds. The sun wasn’t high in the sky, indicating that night was quickly approaching. Brown eyes slowly glanced to the side, observing the officer walking with him. Iwaizumi seemed honest in his intentions, his hands staying by his side while keeping a steady distance between them. By now, any other person would be finding a reason to get closer to Oikawa. And as strange as it was, the lack of attention was making the assistant nervous. When was the last time that someone outside of Little Crows simply wanted to hang out with him? All who contacted the tailor did so with sneaky intentions that involved the shedding of clothes. In those cases, Tooru would be happy to meet up. But after the deed was done, he never lingered. Hanging out with fuck buddies was just weird. Even now, as the two finally reached the sandy shore, Oikawa was tense with the expectation of being jumped or manhandled.

“I’m surprised you weren’t booked tonight.” Yet the only thing he received was a skeptical look before Iwaizumi sat down on the beach, working on ridding himself of his shoes and socks. “Every time we talk, you’ve got a full schedule.”

“I started earlier this morning in case your misfit team needed extra practice,” Oikawa answered, sitting next to the officer who was now stretching his legs out in front of him. The heels of Iwaizumi’s feet hit the water, the shorter man sighing silently at the feeling.

“When’d you get up?”

“I was at the venue at 4.”
“This morning? Jesus.” Oikawa laughed at the scrunched up nose Iwaizumi now wore, the assistant turning his attention to his own shoes.

“I’m used to working long days. One of the brides has been extremely finicky with her dress this past week. I’ve had to tailor it about three separate times this month, and she’s getting more frantic as the date is coming closer. It’s only Wednesday, and I’ve worked close to 40 hours already.”

“Sugawara-san approved this?”

“He doesn’t know.” Shrugging at the arched eyebrow he received, Oikawa tossed his shoes to the side before he sunk his toes into the wet sand. The coldness felt refreshing on his skin, making some of the aches in his worn out body start to ease. In all honesty, he was happy the officer chose the beach to talk. The soft noise of the waves hitting the shoreline was calming to Oikawa, who felt some of his fatigue rising behind his eyes. It hurt to keep them open, the brunet man only managing to nab a few hours of sleep for the past three days. Keeping his energetic facade despite the circumstances was his specialty, though even the assistant had limits. Closing his eyes when the water surged over his feet, Oikawa tried to put a pep into his voice. “Suga-kun doesn’t like when I work too much, so I may forget to put some of my hours onto my time sheet. Ignorance is bliss for my darling boss.”

“You’re pretty dedicated to this place.” Shoulders lowering at the roll of Iwaizumi’s voice, Oikawa nodded, letting himself release the tension in his back.

“It’s been my home since I was in high school. I knew I loved designing clothing back then, but I had no future outlet to use my creativity in. One day I heard Suga-kun talking about his family’s business, and I told him if they ever needed a tailor to give me a call. This was a few months before his parents died. Suga-kun was struggling to maintain the place after the accident, and I had no real plans for life after high school. I sort of appointed myself as Suga-kun’s assistant, and the rest was history. Now I’m his right-hand man. I make sure to keep everyone on the right track so Suga-kun can focus on making people’s dreams come true or whatever he tells our customers.”

“Not gonna lie, your work ethic is impressive.” Fighting to open his eyes, Oikawa looked over to the serious look on Iwaizumi’s face. “You come off like a lackadaisical pervert, but you’ve got some layers to you.”

“I’ve got lots hidden beneath the surface.” The suggestive wink he gave his companion made Iwaizumi roll his eyes, Oikawa grinning before he continued. “So what’s your story, big guy? Were you born with a badge and a gun in your hand?”
“Not really. I was planning on becoming an accountant in high school.” The answer was unexpected, and Oikawa snickered while leaning into Iwaizumi’s side.

“That’s just like you; super boring.”

“I wasn’t looking for exciting, Asskawa. I just wanted a simple, ordinary job to help out my mom.” There was an edge to Iwaizumi’s voice that proved there was more to the story, so Oikawa waited for the officer to continue. “Dad skipped out like the prince charming he was when he found out my mom was pregnant. Mom was fine on her own, but money got tight when she had my big mouth to feed. The accountant thing was an easy way to help support her. But then mom got beat up by some jackasses when she on her way home from the grocery store. They broke her arm and knocked one of her teeth out. The police were as helpful as an umbrella filled with holes. Three more robberies with similar M.Os happened in a month. I realized that there were other people who had felt as helpless as my mom, and nobody was doing anything about it. So I decided I would, and I enrolled into the academy. I got a good partner, and now I’m here.”

“That’s...not even fair.” Groaning as he buried his head into Iwaizumi’s collar, Oikawa weakly punched the firmer chest twice to show his frustration. “Why do you keep showing me up?”

“What are you yapping about now?”

“I was sure my story was going to be so much cooler than yours, but you had to go and be a born again Batman or something. You’re not playing fair!” Eyes closing again, Oikawa whined to show his protest to the information. There was a movement against his side, Oikawa refusing to open his eyes to investigate. He let out a small ‘oomph’ when the shoulder he had been leaning on shifted, making him fall onto the chest of Iwaizumi. The missing arm felt like it was resting behind them, a chuckle vibrating Oikawa’s impromptu pillow.

“Shut up, idiot.” The warm air that passed over his forehead should have bothered him, yet Oikawa didn’t feel the urge to pull away from the body beside him. His weight unconsciously relaxed against the broad man, the week-long stress and tension dissolving into thin air. If Iwaizumi minded the movement, he didn’t show it. It had been years since Oikawa had felt this relaxed in the presence of a potential sex buddy. His mind started to sift through his memories, wondering just when was the last time he had let go like this. It took a minute for him to realize the bitter truth; there had only been one person who had invoked this feeling of security before. But that hadn’t been a sexual escapade or a simple fuck. That had been…

Before the assistant could recall the whole memory, sleep claimed him, keeping him safe from his painful past.
Hot sunlight against his eyelids made Oikawa groan in protest, rolling away from the window to try and continue sleeping. The sudden loss of support under him had the tailor shouting, his whole body slamming into the hard ground below. Pain making him hiss and sit up, Oikawa forced an eyelid open to gather his bearings. Morning was illuminating the room he was in, though it wasn’t his bedroom. Instead, the familiar sofas of his boss’s office made his foggy mind clear, the assistant pushing himself back onto the couch he had previously fallen off of. His ribs still hurting from the fall, Oikawa peeked over the back of his makeshift bed to see a familiar beauty mark and bemused hazel eyes looking at him.

“Good morning, Tooru.”

“I see no pancakes or naked men, which makes this anything but a good morning.” The grumble lost some of its edge when Oikawa yawned, lifting his arms over his head to stretch while he looked around. “What am I doing in your office?”

“You slept here last night.” The explanation needed more context, which Suga seemed to understand when Oikawa gave him a blank stare. “Well, you technically fell asleep on the beach, but Iwaizumi carried you back to my office. He said not to wake you up since you needed the sleep, though he did leave you a note on your blanket.”

“Probably a death threat; Iwa-chan likes to play hard to get,” Oikawa joked, his eyes traveling down in search of the mentioned message. A yellow sticky note caught the tailor’s eye, Oikawa snagging the square off the blanket. Brown eyes peered at the chicken scratch handwriting, his stomach twisting at the small message left behind.

Nice job falling asleep on our “date”, Shittykawa.

The words surprised Oikawa, unsure how he felt about them. All night he had been teasing the officer about the date, which Iwaizumi had denied each time. Yet even if his words had been in jest, Tooru couldn’t shake the weird feeling that was invading his heart. They hadn’t had sex or even shed a single piece of clothing. There was no sexual teasing or plans for a hookup. The two had simply enjoyed each other’s company, getting to know a little more about the other. Iwaizumi opened up about his past, and Oikawa shared a story he had never felt the desire to talk about with anyone else. The night had been simple and quaint, and Iwaizumi had even carried him back to the venue when he had passed out on him. Everything felt strange, yet Oikawa had to bite on his lower lip to keep his smile from showing up.
“He also told me about your little trick with your time card.” Suga’s words brought Oikawa’s gaze back to his boss, who nodded back to the note. “While he was writing that, he said you’re not the type to give yourself a break so I should make you take the day off. I can’t say I disagree with him, though I’m surprised he knows you this well already.”

“It was just a fluke,” Oikawa replied, though the look on Suga’s face showed he didn’t believe that.

“I think it’s more than that, Tooru, but I won’t push you.” Not wanting to continue the conversation, Oikawa looked back down to the note. He kept his eyes on the quotations surrounding one specific word that watered down its truthful meaning.

And for a second, Oikawa wanted the sentence to mean more than it did.

Chapter End Notes

Ah, lots of good feels going around! Kenma is starting to take chances with Kuroo, and Oikawa let down another layer of his wall for Iwaizumi. So, will Tsukishima ever confront Yamaguchi about their fight? What is Daichi and Suga’s next step? Will Hinata have to face his feelings sooner than he expected? And which Little Crows get a little sneaky next chapter? Kudos, comment your guesses, and find out next time!

Next Chapter: Gravity
Gravity

Chapter Summary

It's the little things in life that mean the most

Chapter Notes

Hiya! Thank you all for your sweet words and sticking with me as I'm trying to balance two stories, my job, my internship, and school. It's a lot, but hearing that people like my stories makes me happy. So without more babbling from me, heres the next chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

In his head, Tsukishima knew he had no reason to be standing in the parking lot of Little Crows on the humid Friday night. If he was being honest, there were several other things he could be using his valuable time for. Paperwork still needed to be looked through on his desk, and there was a case next week that was going to trial. Phone calls and responses to emails were on his list, yet none of this deterred him from taking the long drive to the wedding venue. There were some cars that he had never seen in the parking lot, and he faintly remembered being told of a night wedding occurring sometime in May. Even when he closed his eyes and tried to think of a specific date, he couldn't recall the florist giving him one.

It had been over a week since Tsukishima had spoken with Yamaguchi. Eight days, if he was being specific. They had both been at the dance lesson Wednesday, yet Tsukishima hadn't been able to actually talk with the evasive florist. Tsukishima was smart enough to know that the brunet was avoiding him on purpose. The fact that he had willingly chosen Hinata as his dancing partner proved to the lawyer that Yamaguchi was taking their argument to heart. There had been no exchanges of text messages or phone calls, though Tsukishima was unsure why that was an important factor to highlight. Sure, the weeks before had consisted of Yamaguchi randomly sending pictures of bouquets and floral arrangements he had worked on throughout the day. Sometimes Tsukishima would give a heads up of his intention to visit the greenhouse. But it wasn't like they were teenagers; constant communication wasn't necessary for their type of...relationship.

Except now, Tsukishima felt irritated with the radio silence. Work had been stressful, despite nothing extravagant happening. His clients were more annoying, and none of his co-workers could shut up long enough for Tsukishima to get work done. The days seemed longer, and sleep became a delicacy that the blond rarely dabbled in. His family was quiet, for once, but even that felt like a trap waiting to be sprung. He hadn't felt this run down in years, and the logical side of him was urging him to get back in his car and drive home where a bottle of scotch and a bed were waiting.
Yet here he stood, staring at looming building with a scowl.

“Tsukishima?” The voice of the wedding planner made the lawyer lift his head, his golden stare taking in Sugawara’s appearance from around the back of the venue. The older man gave a quiet smile and wave, the other hand holding a basket filled with dinner napkins. From the black attire and earpiece wrapped around Suga’s left ear, Tsukishima confirmed that the venue was preparing for a wedding, and the blond wondered if he would even be able to complete the mission he came for.

“Good evening,” Tsukishima finally answered, giving a polite bow. Sugawara laughed at the manners, though returned them quickly before he spoke.

“Same to you! I’m a little surprised to see you here.”

“I was unaware of the wedding festivities for the night. I can come back-”

“If you’re here for what I think you’re here for, then there’s no need.” The supportive smile Sugawara gave made Tsukishima shift in his shoes, unaware of how much the wedding planner knew. While he had no issue in giving Kuroo passive aggression, Sugawara was a different situation. He played at the same level that Tsukishima did, and was the closest thing for a formidable opponent Tsukishima had encountered as of late. It also didn’t help that he was in an intimate relationship with Daichi, someone that the lawyer respected. Each of these reasons played a factor in the careful response Tsukishima gave.

“I’m not sure.”

“Then maybe I should rephrase it differently.”

“Please do.” Instead of answering, Suga’s hand popped up to his earpiece, the wedding planner tapping a button before he spoke.

“Tadashi, are you still in the hall?” There was a pause before Suga gave a nod, walking the short distance to the silent blond in front of him. “You remember where the hall is, right?”

“Yes, but-” Tsukishima’s grunt was small when Suga shoved the basket into his chest, forcing him to take possession of it while pressing the button again.
“I’m sending someone over to you with the napkins for the tables. He’ll help you get them folded while I go check in on our wedding party.” Releasing the earpiece, Suga smiled brightly while he rose to his toes, giving a rough rub to Tsukishima’s head. “The wedding doesn’t start for another hour, so you’ve got some time to speak with him. I know that he’s been feeling down the past couple days, which makes all of us sad. Let’s try to fix that, okay? Now, off you go. Tadashi is waiting for you, and those tables need napkins.”

Words weren’t able to formulate quick enough to respond to Sugawara’s command, the wedding planner slipping up the front stairs to greet a pair of venue workers carrying chairs. Tsukishima glanced down to the basket, his scowl growing when realizing he no longer had control over the situation. Sugawara had given him more than a simple errand run; the cheerful man wanted Tsukishima and Yamaguchi to talk. The expectation felt heavy on his shoulders, and under normal circumstances, the lawyer would balk at the instructions. He didn’t work at the venue; if he wanted, he could drop the basket and simply leave. It wasn’t his job to deliver supplies around the venue. Didn’t Sugawara have helpers for this?

Yet even with defiance in his veins, Tsukishima’s body moved toward the hall with the basket in hand. People were bumbling around the outside area, and Tsukishima kept out of sight in case a particular photographer was lurking. The last thing he needed was Kuroo questioning his appearance as well. It was one thing for Sugawara to discover him; Kuroo wasn’t mature enough to keep his comments to himself. The mission to stay unnoticed went smoothly as Tsukishima departed from the busy part of the venue, moving into the hallway that led to the hall.

He had been in the room a few days ago for the dance lesson, though he wouldn’t have believed it was the same area if not having walked into it himself. What once had been an open room was now completely transformed. The darker decorations lined the walls, gothic lights dangling down each window to create an intimate feeling. The overhead lights to the hall were low, but Tsukishima could make out Yamaguchi on the other side of the room. He was balancing on a ladder, twining flowers on the chandelier above a table. Music was filling the air, and the rock undertones of the song were surprising to Tsukishima. The florist was a cheery, upbeat man who seemed scared of his own shadow. The aggressive vocals and defiant theme were a complete contrast to the florist who mouthed the words as he hopped off the ladder. Seeing his opening to speak, Tsukishima let out a sigh loud enough to catch the attention of the brunet.

“Is this a wedding or a funeral?” His question was met with Yamaguchi’s tense back, the freckled man quick to turn to face him. When recognizing that Yamaguchi was clearly confused, the lawyer lifted the basket. “Sugawara asked me to bring these here.”

“Oh, thank you.” Nervously Yamaguchi moved over to the wall, flicking the ceiling lights on in order to illuminate the room. Wincing at the sudden change of brightness, Tsukishima moved to place the delivery onto the closest table. The hesitation in Yamaguchi’s steps was obvious, though Tsukishima kept the observation to himself while looking around the hall.
“Isn’t it bad luck to have black in your wedding?”

“Only in some cultures,” Yamaguchi answered, finally approaching the table as he stared down at the black napkins. “Red is seen as a bad color in western cultures, yet several eastern cultures wear red for their wedding gowns. Many colors simply represent the personality of the bride. This one is very sophisticated and likes the intimate feeling the color gives off with the red of her flowers.”

“Seems overbearing.” Was the blond’s response, turning his attention back to the florist. Brown eyes were gazing up at him, a lower lip snagged between white teeth in obvious nerves.

“Not to be rude, but...well, why are you here?”

“I told you, Sugawara asked me to deliver the napkins.”

“I-I meant at the venue!” Obviously, the taller man knew the real intent of Yamaguchi’s question. Unsure of how to answer, Tsukishima glanced to the potted plant sitting comfortably on the table.

“This flower...is this the bride’s chosen flower?”

“That’s right. They’re Amaryllis flowers; meaning pride, determination, and radiant beauty.” The words came out of Yamaguchi’s mouth as if rehearsed, Tsukishima keeping his stare on the familiar looking plant.

“Hm. It’s fitting, I suppose.”

“For the wedding?” Yamaguchi’s question was answered with a shake of the head, Tsukishima finally turning his attention back to the florist.

“No, my mother. I doubt she knows the meaning, but this is the flower she keeps on her office desk at her office.” He paused in his explanation, waiting for the florist to digest the answer. “The woman is as beautiful as she is business savvy; the only thing she lacks is a loving bone in her body. She’s a perfect match for my father on paper in that sense, I suppose.”
“You’re not...close with your parents?” Yamaguchi asked quietly, the edge of sadness bleeding into his words. Tsukishima gave a slow shrug, distracting himself from Yamaguchi’s stare by reaching out to snag a napkin. With ease he folded the cloth, his words slow and steady.

“My family isn’t like yours; we don’t enjoy each other’s presence much. My parents had children because it was an expectation from their parents. To be honest, either would have been happy without having a child; after my brother, they weren’t prepared to have a second. My birth was unexpected, but getting rid of me was out of the question. Their reputation would be tarnished by adoption or an abortion, I suppose. Parenting wasn’t something natural for either my mother or father, so they ran my home like a business instead. Excellence was the assumption; it was nothing to be proud of. It was a bit...unexpected to hear high praise from your parents.”

“I guess that’s because all they ever wanted was to be parents.” Yamaguchi’s words were soft, and Tsukishima’s eye caught a glimpse of gratitude in the florist’s smile. The brunet reached for a napkin, shaking it out once before starting to mimic Tsukishima’s fold. “They struggled to get pregnant for years, so when they had me, they were overjoyed. I guess that’s why they sometimes overdo the compliments. One time, my mom cried because I won a spelling bee.”

“They’re proud of your accomplishments,” Tsukishima amended, Yamaguchi giving a side smile in response.

“But I’m used to it. You’re not. I’m sorry they gushed over you; it’s just their way of showing they really like you and-”

“Don’t apologize for your parents being good people. It’s unwarranted, as their actions did not cause any harm.” The dismissal in Tsukishima’s voice was low, and the lawyer felt his eyes narrow on the new napkin between his fingers when he continued. “If they, however, spoke in a disrespectful manner toward someone they preferred to converse with, then an apology would be appropriate.”

“Is...that your way of saying ‘I’m sorry’?” Yamaguchi’s voice wasn’t tinted with mockery or superiority; it was pure curiosity that the florist used when peering up at Tsukishima. With a dusting of pink on his cheeks, the lawyer swayed his gaze away, unsure why the harmless smile the freckled man wore was so disarming to him.

“You’re an intelligent person; I’ll assume you can read between the lines.” Despite the lack of admittance, Yamaguchi seemed satisfied with the answer. Placing the finished napkin onto the pile they were creating, Yamaguchi stepped around the table and snagged the firm bicep of the blond. A tone of protest was rising in Tsukishima’s throat, but the noise died a noble death when warm arms wrapped around the taller man’s torso. Yamaguchi’s face felt like a furnace as it pressed into the side of Tsukishima’s neck, his voice showing his embarrassment better than any facial
“Th-This is how my family says so-sorry, so…” Tense shoulders kept their rigid form for a few heartbeats, Tsukishima unsure of how to respond. Physical touch was unheard of in his family; a handshake was only acceptable when finishing a business transaction. He couldn’t remember a single time in his life he had witnessed his parents showing affection to one another. His brother was known for impromptu hugs, but even those were few and far between. If any of his friends attempted to share their “signs of affection”, it was met with a quick stiff arm or a lethal glare from the lawyer. That was just who Tsukishima was.

But here, standing in the embrace of a man who he could easily overpower, the blond felt different. There was no shower of rainbows or herald of angels singing hymns of love. The back of his neck was sweaty from the heat in the hall, and his feet ached from standing on them all day. Dinner had yet to be thought of, and his stomach was starting to cramp in hunger. These physical struggles were logical, and something that Tsukishima was able to alter on his own. All it required was him separating from Yamaguchi’s touch. Despite this basic understanding, the blond didn’t move away. Instead, hesitant arms raised from their frozen spot by his sides, Tsukishima silently wrapping them around the florist’s back. Instinct told him to pull Yamaguchi closer, their bodies pressing together from the reciprocated embrace. There was a moment where the brunet’s back stiffened from surprise, but it was quick to dissolve. To save face, Tsukishima released an irritated sigh which he was sure the other man knew wasn’t felt.

The embrace was quick to break apart. It didn’t seem to matter, though; the smile that spread across the cherry-colored cheeks matched the elation filling the florist’s brown gaze.

“Thanks…fo-for, you know, bringing the napkins.” Arching his eyebrow at the fumbling man’s lame explanation, Tsukishima took the higher road by remaining quiet. The lapse of conversation made Yamaguchi avoid eye contact, his attention drawing to the clock on the wall. “It’s that late already? The ceremony will be starting soon, and I’ve still got to finish the hall.”

“I’ll let you get back to work.” Yamaguchi seemed torn by Tsukishima’s response, and gave a resigned sigh before nodding.

“Right. I guess I’ll see you around, then?” The lawyer nodded once, his eyes lingering on the obvious disappointment tugging at Yamaguchi’s face. Silently he made his way toward the doorway, his mind quick to shift toward the need for food. If he didn’t get dinner soon…

“Yamaguchi.”
“Huh?” He didn’t have to turn his head toward the florist to know he caught his attention, and he could easily imagine the confused face Yamaguchi was making.

“In my family, we don’t apologize. We do, however, take out those we wish to get in our good favor.” The golden gaze casually glanced at the hand which was resting on the edge of the entrance, his ear picking up the small inhale of breath behind him. “When you’re available, I’d like to request your presence for dinner.”

“You wanna...have dinner with me? Like a...” It was only then that Tsukishima returned his gaze to the obviously frazzled florist behind him, a golden eyebrow arched above a smug smirk.

“Like a what?” The panicked look he received looked good on the florist, Yamaguchi struggling to keep his cheeks from burning off.

“Nothing! I just...Yes, I’d really like that.” To prove his point, he nodded his head rapidly, bunching the napkin he had been folding in-between sweaty hands.

“Good. I’ll be in touch.” Satisfied with the response, Tsukishima walked away, not giving Yamaguchi a second look. He didn’t need to; the muffled shout of excitement from the hall proved his point had gotten across just fine.

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“God damnit.” Frustrated didn’t even begin to describe the feelings coursing through Daichi’s body as he slammed his front door, tossing the top of his uniform onto the ground. Sugar’s head popped up from the couch, a wagging tail showing she didn’t mind the angry owner. One glance to the loyal puppy had Daichi’s shoulders relaxing, moving to give a rough pat to Sugar’s head. Even with the loving lick of his pet, the anger simmering just under his skin couldn’t be cooled.

It was rare that he came home from work mad. At times he was tired or overworked, but he normally enjoyed his co-workers. Today, however, a younger cop had managed to lose the paperwork that Daichi had been waiting for all week. Normally the accident wouldn’t bother the workhorse, as the cop had made mistakes when he was starting off as well. Except this case was different; it was Suga’s. He wasn’t allowed to be the head on the case, as Ukai was aware of Daichi’s relation with the wedding planner. Even if he didn’t, Daichi would have recused himself from the case. He trusted the officers in charge, but the error had cost them valuable time and information. It was aggravation that had made Daichi snap at his co-worker, the younger cop beyond frightened at the officer’s rant.
Ukai had yanked him into his office and gave him his own tongue lashing before sending him home.

“I’ll make sure to apologize to everyone tomorrow,” Daichi murmured, Sugar’s loud bark seeming to agree with Daichi’s decision. Another few strokes on the dog’s head was broken up when Daichi’s phone started to vibrate, the dark haired man fishing in his pocket to snag the phone. One glance to the caller ID made his previous frown disappear, Daichi easily accepting the phone call. “Hello?”

“Good evening, Daichi.” Suga’s airy tone lifted the officer’s spirits, the wedding planner humming slightly before proceeding with the conversation. “I was just informed that my assistant has started to work on your wedding party’s attire and I wanted to give you the good news. What are you doing on this lovely warm night?”

“Besides getting chewed out by my boss? Nothing really.” Casually Daichi tossed in the frustrating outcome to his day, listening to a soft intake of breath from the other side of the phone.

“Well that doesn’t sound very pleasant at all. Care to share what happened?”

“One of the rookies made a mistake and I may have lost my cool on him.”

“Ah, that’s never good. I hate when I get into fights with my co-workers, although it’s a whole other story when Tooru is on the other end. Sloppy tears and threats of moving to Maui are almost always involved.” Suga’s words forced a smile onto Daichi’s face, shaking his head at the all too believable story. “So are you home, then?”

“Yeah, just got here.”

“Then I suggest you go and take a shower. Nothing helps like some hot water washing away your troubles. I’m just about to get into my car, so I’ll give you a text when I’m not driving.” The suggestion was bittersweet to the cop; though taking a shower sounded amazing, he had hoped to spend more time talking to Suga. Speaking with the wedding planner was a good way to unwind for Daichi. The sweetness of his voice and his heartwarming laugh always settled something inside the officer. They had conversed more since Suga’s break-in, the dark haired man tending to check in once his shift was over. If the younger man was bothered, he never spoke of it, and the two had no problem delving into deeper conversation.
“Let me know you got home safe,” Daichi instructed, the two exchanging an easy goodbye before ending the call. True to what Suga had predicted, the steaming water felt amazing for the tired officer. His skin practically melted from the intense heat, but Daichi refused to lower the temperature. After thoroughly scrubbing his skin, Daichi left the shower, a towel still resting on his bare shoulders. Overheating his body from the sauna-like conditions, Daichi shrugged on a pair of workout shorts and trudged out to the living room. Getting sent home early wasn’t all bad; there were some good shows that he had been dying to watch.

But before the officer could get comfortable on his lumpy couch, the sound of his doorbell caught his attention.

“Coming,” Daichi called out, letting out a slow breath before forcing himself back to his feet. Iwaizumi was due to make an appearance and give his partner a piece of his mind. Daichi was surprised the man didn’t simply barge into his apartment like he always-

“Wow.” Brown eyes blinked at the awestruck tone, Daichi realizing that it wasn’t his grumpy neighbor at the door. Instead stood Suga, his cheeks pink and eyes curious when trailing down the expanse of Daichi’s exposed chest.

“Suga? What are you doing here?”

“I wanted to surprise you, but then you…” It took the officer a second to realize why Suga was distracted, Daichi coughing once and modestly scratching the side of his neck.

“Sorry about that.”

“Don’t be.” Instantly Suga’s eyes were back to Daichi’s face, a smile on his face while he lifted his hand. In it was a grocery bag, sending another wave of confusion through the officer. “When I heard you had a rough day, I knew just what you needed. So I went to the store, bought some ice cream and rented a horror movie. I figured seeing the bad day these people go through would make you feel a little better about your own.”

“You didn’t have to do this,” Daichi said quietly, Suga’s shrug showing he brushed the response off casually.

“I didn’t have any other plans. Plus, I may be using this as an excuse to come see you.”
honesty in the wedding planner’s voice took Daichi by surprise, but the warm sizzle in his chest proved the words were welcome.

“Then I hope you bought chocolate ice cream.” A melodious laugh filled the living room when Suga walked in, Daichi closing the front door before following his guest into the apartment. He let the wedding planner take in his surroundings as he snagged a shirt from the pile of clean laundry, feeling modest over his lack of clothing. He was amused by how easily Suga made himself at home, dropping the bag onto the table before crawling onto the couch. “And what movie are we watching tonight?”

“Only the best horror movie to ever be made; Friday the 13th.”

“New or old?” The look of disgust from Suga made Daichi laugh. The fair haired man lifted his nose in a snobby nature that was an obvious act.

“Like I would every betray the classic that was the original. Just for that, I should eat both tubs of ice cream by myself.” Suga tossed the movie toward the owner of the apartment before he dove into the bag, pulling out an individual dessert and a plastic spoon. Sugar was on the wedding planner in a second, another set of laughter coming from Suga as he rubbed his face into the dog’s nose. “Hello Sugar. Still as cute as ever, I see.”

“Try saying that when she’s shoving her paw in your face at 5 in the morning,” Daichi grumbled while throwing the DVD in, though the lack of anger proved he didn’t mind. When making his way to the couch, he caught hazel eyes watching him, a small smile partly hidden by white fur.

“Why would I be here that early, Daichi?” The innocent question was quick to enflame the officer’s face, Daichi forcing out a sharp cough while dropping to sit on the opposite side of Sugar. He tried to focus his stare on the television, watching the creepy menu screen pop up instead. Trying to distract himself from the man beside him, the owner of the apartment snatched his remote, quick to click on the start of the movie. He knew that Suga was teasing him, yet the idea of having the wedding planner spend the night...well, it definitely wasn’t a bad thought.

“So you don’t like any new horror movies?” The change of subject was abrupt and obvious, the wedding planner giving a small hum before he shifted closer on the couch. Sugar, no longer getting the attention from the guest, hopped off the sofa in order to find a comfy spot on the floor to rest.

“Sometimes I go with Kuroo and Kenma when a good looking one comes out. But I tend to prefer the classics.” A moment of silence fell between them, Daichi jumping when feeling a warm weight drop onto his shoulder. Brown eyes finally pulled away from the teen counselors on the screen to
peek at Suga, the fair haired man’s eyes lidded and facing the television. “I still remember watching them with my father when my mother would go to bed early. She hated anything scary. She wasn’t a fan of letting me watch them either, so it was like a secret between me and my father. I’m pretty sure she knew what we were doing, but as a kid I was sure we were pulling the wool over her eyes.”

“So you were sneaky back then, too.” Daichi’s spine relaxed as he fell back into the couch, feeling at place sitting beside the younger man. Both looked back to the movie in time to see the first set of victims murdered viciously by Jason in the cabin. At the action Suga buried into the officer’s side, giving a meek smile when catching the questioning gaze of Daichi.

“I may love them, but horror movies totally freak me out.” The statement was so Suga that Daichi couldn’t contain his laugh even as the other huffed and smacked his shoulder. “Daichi, don’t be mean!”

“Alright, alright, come here.” Too swept up in the good feeling that always bloomed inside Daichi at the sight of Suga, the officer didn’t hesitate to slide his arm around the planner’s shoulders to pull him closer. Seeming pleased despite his blush, the wedding planner pressed his head to rest on Daichi’s chest, allowing him to still see the screen from his position.

Throughout the classic film, Daichi couldn’t keep himself from smiling. Horror movies had never been his first pick; he was drawn more to historical films even as a child. But having Suga burying his face into Daichi’s shoulder after each kill or snag his hand after a particularly unexpected scare made the film jump to one of his favorites. They didn’t speak much during the movie, only breaking the silence when Suga remembered a random fact about the making of the film. Ice cream was shared and devoured, the empty bins dripping onto the coffee table in front of them. Even knowing the mess was going to aggravate him later, Daichi didn’t move, refusing to leave his spot next to Suga. He felt content with the wedding planner, something he hadn’t shared with another person for quite some time.

The clock was close to hitting 1am when the movie finally ended. Suga was quick to offer help in cleaning up the living room despite Daichi assuring him it was fine. Afterwards, Daichi walked Suga to his door, the planner stretching his arms over his head while letting out a slow yawn.

“That was really fun. We’ll have to do a movie marathon on a night I don’t have work in the morning.” The tidbit of information caught Daichi by surprise, which made Suga sneak in a laugh and grin. “Yup, I’ve got an 8am walk-through setup for tomorrow.”

“Why didn’t you tell me that sooner?” Daichi asked, Suga shrugging while twirling the DVD case in his hands.
“Because I knew you’d make me leave, and I didn’t want that. You were there for me when my house got broken into, and you’ve been working really hard on my case. I wanted to repay the favor and show you that you can rely on me too. I can’t really shoot guns or arrest people, but I like to think ice cream and horror flicks are close enough.” Daichi stared down at the shorter man, unsure of what to say in response. But when catching the unsure edge of Suga’s hazel eyes, the officer decided words weren’t necessary.

His hands were grasping Suga’s hips seconds before he kissed the unexpecting man. Soft lips were slightly parted under his own, and Daichi took the initiative to press his tongue against the open seam while stepping closer to his guest. The thud of the case hitting the floor was followed by lean arms wrapping around his neck, Suga eagerly returning the kiss presented to him. Daichi’s stomach warmed at the slow stroke of the wedding planner’s tongue against his own. His body pressed Suga’s into the sturdy front door, his thumbs brushing the exposed skin between the bunched shirt and black slacks. A moan was echoed into his mouth, making the officer shiver. His lower lip was sucked between the soft mouth of Suga, a hot sensation tugging at his groin when teeth nibbled the bruised skin. His hands gripped tighter on the hips presented to him, shoving his mouth back onto the greedy lips of his guest.

Suga’s skin was riddled with goosebumps wherever Daichi touched. The smooth expanse of porcelain skin was taunting to Daichi’s mind, who continued to kiss the breath from his lungs. The fair haired man didn’t seem to mind, eagerly arching his hips into the strong hands of the officer. Though he was tempted to explore further up his torso, the gentleman inside him was quick to douse the thought. Giving another lingering kiss to the fully swollen lips of the planner, Daichi finally broke their connection in order to steady his breathing and speak.

“Are you free Friday?”

“Friday?” The dazed look he received stroked his ego more than he expected, unable to resist swiping his thumb against Suga’s lower lip. The planner’s mind seemed to clear at the motion, fumbling to pull out his phone and glance down at the calendar on it. “Well, I have an appointment at 3, and there’s a wedding Saturday afternoon. But other than that, I’m open.”

“So you have no plans for dinner?” The words were rushed, but it didn’t seem to bother the recovering planner. With a teasing look, Suga gave a gentle punch to Daichi’s chest.

“Should I assume this is your way of asking me on a date?” Despite their previous actions, the mention of the proper name for his question had the officer’s cheeks dusted with a pink tone.

“Only if I can assume you’ll say yes.”
“Tooru would be proud of that pick up line.” Suga’s gaze was warm with humor as he stepped forward, lifting to his toes to place a soft kiss onto Daichi’s mouth. It lacked the heat and explosive desire from before, but it still made Daichi’s heart flutter. As Suga pulled away from the contact, he opened the door, keeping their gaze connected. “Pick me up at work. Is seven okay?”

“Yeah,” Daichi breathed, Suga sending the dark haired man a signature smile. He bent to snag the long forgotten DVD before making his quick escape. Even as the door closed, Daichi didn’t move, feeling if he did, he would wake up. He thought about how the night had developed, and how none of it would have happened if not for the mess up of the rookie officer. That had left him time to answer Suga’s call, something he would not have been able to do on the clock. Then he got an impromptu movie night, and not only had he got to kiss Suga (twice), but he had gotten his first official date with the attractive man. In the end, the mess up had gotten him further than anything his brain had tried coming up with.

“Damn. I guess I owe the rookie a beer,” Daichi mumbled, still smiling as he walked out of the room.

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“Lastly, with the end of the school year coming up, make sure that you’re thinking of the deadlines for grades. If we’re worried about any child’s development, let’s get those referrals out for testing in the next week. If you all wait until the last minute, we won’t have time to get full assessments. The younger we can get these tests done, the better it is for the children’s education.” The principal of the school gave the teachers around the table a few seconds to process his information before nodding, gathering his papers. “That’s all I had on our agenda. You are all dismissed.”

“Yes!” The loud shout from the short teacher was quick to grab everyone’s attention, though Hinata didn’t care. Instead he scampered from the table, yanking his messenger bag over his shoulder while rushing to gather his things.

“With the way you’re moving, you’d think it was the weekend.” A fellow teacher and friend of Hinata’s gave a knowing look to a man on his right, the lighter haired man laughing in response.

“It’s Wednesday, Koji, which is basically date night for Shouyou.” The suggestive comment made Hinata flush, looking at his two co-workers and fumbling to respond.

“Izumi! It’s nothing like that.”
“Of course it’s not,” Koji replied, keeping his voice low and glancing to the window with a sigh.

“But if it was, you know we’d support you, right?” Izumi’s calm voice didn’t help the uncomfortable ball welling in the pre school teacher’s chest, Hinata shoving the last pile of papers into his bag before pushing away from the table.

“I-I’ve got to get to the venue. I’ll see you tomorrow.” Using his speed as a weapon, Hinata bolted from the conference room, trying to focus his attention on not being late.

In Hinata’s opinion, there was nothing wrong with men liking men. Plenty of his friends were into men, either being gay or bi-sexual. It didn’t change their friendship one bit. Seeing Noya and Asahi sharing such a loving relationship wasn’t altered because both of them were guys. Some were quite open about their preference for men, like Tanaka or Noya. Asahi and Ennoshita rested on the other side of the spectrum, preferring to only give the information to those who they trusted. His other friends varied depending on the circumstances. No matter their comfort zone, Hinata met each friend at their level and supported them any way he could. When Noya and Tanaka had roped Ennoshita into his first gay pride march, the little teacher offered to go along. Falling in love wasn’t a choice, and who your heart yearned for was just as random.

Yet on the trip to the wedding venue, Hinata couldn’t shake his friend’s question. It sounded less like a guess and more a known fact. The infamous night with Yachi came slinking back into his mind like a long forgotten secret. Because of that altercation, everything in Hinata’s life was flipped on it’s head. Things that he was sure of two months ago felt complicated and tentative. Feelings about relationships weren’t as clear cut as he wanted to believe. Before, a thought of kissing a man would be weird for Hinata. He could stand by his friend’s romantic choices without actually jumping in the fray. But now, while he parked in the well-kept lot, a flash of narrowed blue eyes and slender fingers caused a physical reaction in his lower stomach. It made his mind fuzzy and his heart pound, distracting him from the pair of voices conversing in the venue’s kitchen.

“You really take the ‘dark and mysterious’ thing too literal, Tobi-chan.” A tone that could only be compared to a purr paused Hinata’s feet, the teacher standing still in the kitchen’s doorway. The moment of paralysis only lasted a second, the orange haired man hiding behind the wall to peek his amber gaze inside stealthily. Kageyama’s glare was a normal sight, though the brunet tailor sitting on the counter was different. With lean legs swinging casually, Oikawa leaned closer to the stoic baker and gave a wink. “Yet beneath that cold mask, you really are a Code Shamrock.”

“You’re impeding my work; I need that counter,” Kageyama answered, ignoring the smirk from his co-worker to focus on stirring the batter in his grasp.
“You’re just making a cake to show off to chibi-kun.” Hearing the nickname puffed Hinata’s cheeks in irritation, though it was quick to disperse when thinking about the sentence. Blinking once in surprise, Hinata pressed closer to the door as Oikawa rolled his eyes. “I looked at your calendar; you don’t have any chocolate cakes on the list. Which means you finished your other cakes, and now you’re scared the little rugrat won’t want to hang out with you unless you tempt him with treats.”

“It’s not that!” The rising color in the baker’s cheeks was a hint his words weren’t telling the truth. Oikawa seemed to catch onto the same thought, rolling his eyes and scoffing.

“You’re so dumb it’s almost cute.” Stunning his co-worker with his statement, Oikawa took the opportunity to reach forward and dip his finger into the chocolate batter. Not giving Kageyama time to react, the tailor popped the coated digit into his mouth and hummed in pleasure.

“Oikawa-san, please don’t do that.”

“Why? Giving you dirty ideas?” The distance between the two wedding employees decreased to mere inches, making Hinata’s eyes widen in shock. The baker seemed taken aback by the comment as well, nearly dropping the bowl at Oikawa’s actions.

“Oikawa-”

“We could make them a reality, if you wanted.” Their noses almost brushed at the proximity, and before he could think twice about it, Hinata was rushing into the room.

“Bakayama!” His call to the baker had the desired effect; Kageyama lifted his head away from Oikawa in order to send a fierce look his way. Having the deadly look on him should have given Hinata the chills, yet something else bubbled inside as he watched the baker’s attention focus solely on him. Like he had forgetting the third person in the room, Kageyama stormed over toward the approaching teacher with a growl.

“Idiot, you’re late. Where have you been?” He didn’t hesitate to shift the bowl to one arm, his free hand reaching out to snap the teacher’s head.

“I was stuck in a meeting! I’ve got a job too, ya know.” Even as Hinata whined and batted the hand away from his hair, amber eyes flickered over toward the brunet who was silently watching the two from his spot. Once making eye contact, Oikawa smirked, sending a weird twinge in Hinata’s
chest. He had expected some sort of annoyance or displeasure from the tailor, but the victorious
look on his face wasn’t sitting well with the smaller man. Feeling defensive at the lingering
attention, Hinata turned away from Kageyama to face Oikawa. “A-Are you looking to fight?!”

“I could ask the same thing, chibi-kun. You look a little annoyed.” Unsure of how to answer,
Hinata remained quiet, though Oikawa didn’t mind the lack of response. Shrugging as he pushed
off the counter, the assistant rolled his shoulder before walking around the two. Kageyama didn’t
seem to notice the strain between them, his lips dropping to a frown as he placed the bowl onto the
kitchen island and spoke.

“What are you up to now?”

“Nothing, I’m leaving.” Casual as a cucumber, Oikawa paused at the kitchen’s exit before sending
a lazy glance back over his shoulder. “I don’t want to make your little boyfriend any more jealous.”

The comment should have annoyed Hinata. Oikawa was implying that he had a romantic
relationship with the baker. It was the third time in a short period that someone had implied he was
interested in a male partner. To make it worse, it was in front of Kageyama, the person Oikawa was
implying the teacher wanted to be with. These pieces of the situation should have had Hinata
protesting, shouting insults at the tailor and denying the claim. Yet even as the brunet waved and
departed the eerily quiet kitchen, Hinata couldn’t feel anger. Someone thought he was Kageyama’s
boyfriend? The strange pressure in his chest when thinking of Oikawa’s claim felt different. It was
nice. He should have hated it, being called the baker’s partner. Yet even as his cheeks rose with
color, Hinata’s lips twitched with the desire to smile.

“Hinata?” The low voice against his ear synchronized with the steady hand resting on the bottom
of his spine, the teacher letting out a small gasp at the touch. Even with his shirt as a buffer, he
could feel Kageyama’s warm skin radiate through his back. The touch was gentle, like someone
trying to soothe or comfort. Despite the benign implication, the location was a sensitive spot for
the teacher, making a strong shiver vibrate his body. Embarrassed by his knee-jerk reaction, Hinata
jumped away from the baker, climbing on top of the counter that the tailor had previously been
occupying to escape. His face was hot, and he willed his blush away as he tried to think of an
excuse for his erratic behavior. The slow blink from the baker showed his confusion at the
reaction, though the look passed into guilt with little time for Hinata to process it. Kageyama
shoved both hands into his pockets, his eyes downcast and his voice quiet. “Right, you’re...Sorry. I
didn’t mean to freak you out.”

“Y-You didn’t,” Hinata protested weakly, knowing his cowering on the counter didn’t help his
case. Blue eyes were quick to challenge his statement with a narrowed stare, making Hinata’s
stomach flip with butterflies he didn’t ask for.
“You moved away from me.”

“I was just surprised.”

“You jumped onto the counter.”

“...Really surprised.”

“Hinata, I felt you cringe-”

“I liked it!” The words flopped from his mouth with little effort, though Hinata wanted to chop his tongue off when seeing the baker’s eyes widen. Feeling his chest compress in confusion, the smaller man grasped his hair with his hands and gave a painful tug. “I mean I didn’t like it but- maybe I did? I don’t know! It’s just-you’re...this feels so much more ‘bwah’.”

“Bwah.” Kageyama repeated, the irritated look proving Hinata was making no sense. The painful tugs of his stomach, hands, and his heart were overwhelming him. Why was everything so confusing? He just wanted to be normal! Was that too much for ask? Closing his eyes, Hinata prayed that he could wish the conflicting emotions away. He just needed a minute to breathe. But when his ears picked up the slow shuffle of Kageyama’s feet coming closer, his heartbeat rocketed to concerning levels. “What does that-“

“It didn’t feel like this with her!” The shout echoed in the large kitchen, Hinata choking on the last word before pressing his palms over his eyes. His body felt itchy, his heartbeat pounding in his ears as he forced himself to keep breathing. The silence that fell between the two was tense, the teacher pressing his hands harder into his face. Confusion, guilt, and pain hit him hard. Why had he said that? Kageyama was not his friend; he was a guy who was forced to work with him. From the get go, the taller man had made it clear that their relationship was not voluntary. Even if Kageyama had let him come more often, that didn’t mean he wanted to deal with Hinata’s existential crisis. Yet even as he chastised himself, the short man wanted the baker to care. He wanted to mean something-

“With...who?” Slowly, Hinata slid his hands away from his face, amber eyes peeking between orange bangs to look at the uneasy look Kageyama was presenting to him. The baker’s hands were curled on the edges of the counter on either side of Hinata’s thighs, his own legs close to brushing the teacher’s knees from their proximity. Slightly bent to meet Hinata’s gaze on the same level, it was obvious that the dark haired man was not used to this type of intimate conversation. Still, he stayed, trying to frown enough to hide his nerves from Hinata.
“Oh.” Giving his own blink of surprise, Hinata hesitantly dropped his hands into his lap, his legs swinging slightly while he spoke. “With my ex-girlfriend, Yachi.”

“She didn’t make you feel...bwah?” Hearing the unique word come from the baker’s mouth made Hinata’s smile hard to hide, though the teacher gave a slight nod to show that Kageyama was correct.

“We didn’t really date long; maybe a month? She’s my best friend, so it just kind of felt like we should date or something. And Yachi’s really cool! But when we kissed...it didn’t really feel like much. That was sort of normal for me; even in high school, I liked to cuddle and stuff, but I wasn’t super into kissing. Yachi wasn’t either, so it seemed like we were working out. But then...” The lightness that had peeked into the conversation was quick to hide as Hinata bit his lower lip in trepidation. “Some of my friends started to tease me about not ‘getting any’, a-and so I tried it. We tried it, we re-really did but...but my body didn’t…it couldn’t...”

His body didn’t react the way it was supposed to. Despite having Yachi undressed in front of him, Hinata couldn’t get aroused. It had shook him to the core, humiliated him despite Yachi’s supportive words and comforting embrace. None of it made sense to him back then; why wouldn’t he get turned on in this situation? He didn’t feel pressure being with Yachi, and he thought she was super pretty. But words like ‘sexy’ and ‘alluring’ weren’t ever really in his head when he kissed her. Then again, they had never been. Women just didn’t spark that description from him, no matter what they wore or how they were speaking. He had confessed these thoughts to his best friend later that night, after the two had reclothed and snuggled up on Hinata’s couch.

It was then that Yachi had asked him the question that tore his world apart at the seams.

“And now I’m here, and I’m not sure what I’m supposed to do.” The words were wobbly from Hinata’s throat, the teacher blinking back a few tears at his lack of control. It was one thing to occasionally question his sexuality, but to accept that he wasn’t straight was a whole other ballgame. He laughed despite his desire to cry, his head dropping down to hide his humiliation. This shouldn’t have been a big deal; millions of people were gay. Most of his friends were. He was in a wedding for two men! It wasn’t like this was a terminal illness or an unexpected death. Love was love; those were words he lived by.

Yet still he couldn’t contain the water that lined his eyes when staring at the scuffed up shoes that swayed in front of him. His mind echoed the memories of his mother teasing him about the day he would have his children. His sister asked him what his perfect wife would look like with expectant eyes. Would he let them down if he didn’t want that life? Suddenly, everything felt like too much. No matter how much he wanted to simply fall into his new role gracefully, he felt gravity dragging him down with no chance to gain his balance.
“There’s nothing you can do, idiot.” The firm words from Kageyama stung, but before he could feel the pain, a sharp tug on his shoulder made him topple into the warm chest in front of him. Hinata’s legs cradled the slender hips of the baker, whose arms were now wrapped around the little back in front of him.

“Kage...yama?” The hesitation in his voice was met with a tighter squeeze and a rushed response.

“Suga-san did this when Yamaguchi’s family cat died, so...” The way Kageyama tapered off at the end of the sentence proved just how little he knew about comforting another person, though the awkwardness of the sentence made Hinata’s lips rise in a smile.

“You’re really stupid, Bakayama.”

“S-Shut up.” Laughing for the first time since coming into the kitchen, Hinata buried his face into the tense shoulder and let his hands wrap around Kageyama’s torso. Everything about the moment should have made his emotional state worse, yet despite the stiffness of the embrace, Hinata felt his shoulders relinquish their tension. Just knowing that Kageyama was attempting to console him made some of the panic dwindle. Hesitantly, the baker’s palm rubbed circles down the teacher’s spine, and Hinata hummed to show his approval. His face was pressed into the cotton shirt on Kageyama’s shoulder, but the shorter man didn’t fight the hug. Instead, he leaned into it, his heartbeat strongly thumping into his ribcage as he closed his eyes.

Being held by Kageyama felt different, but Hinata couldn’t tell if that was a good thing or not. Every shift or movement from Hinata made the baker tense, his hands freezing and his breath stilling. It only began again when the teacher settled into one place, nudging his nose into the bony collarbone against his cheek. A hint of vanilla in Kageyama’s scent comforted the teacher, though he wasn’t sure why. There was still a part of Hinata that wanted to panic at feeling so at ease in the arms of another man. But this was Kageyama, the grumpy baker who hit him daily but saved him pieces of cake to take home each week. Of course Hinata would feel good being embraced by the confusing man. After all, wasn’t he the one who started this whole mess in his heart, to begin with? Hinata’s fingers twisted in the fabric of the baker’s shirt, closing his eyes tight to ignore the question. He didn’t want to think about sexuality or emotions anymore.

Instead, he focused on the rhythm of Kageyama’s hand on his back, and how comforting the action was to his restless soul.

Chapter End Notes
Lots of happiness with just a pinch of pain, but it's a heck of a lot better than normal, right? With lots of tension and emotions being tossed around, will these men find love? How will Suga and Daichi's date go? Will they have some unannounced guests? And which Little Crow will discover something that will change his life forever? Kudos, comments and find out!

Next Chapter: The Memories That Built You and Me
The Memories That Built You and Me

Chapter Summary

Sometimes, it’s the unexpected things that mean the most.

Chapter Notes

Ahh thank you all for all the pretty comments! You all make me so happy =) And with my schedule slowing down at the end of October, I'm super pumped to really focus on the second half of this story and the new stories I'll be putting out after my Soulmate story. So, enjoy this!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Of course, I’ll make sure that the fountain has white chocolate for the wedding.” Suga’s ear was pressed to his cell phone as he walked down the quiet hall, stopping at each window to check that they were locked. The lights were already dimmed in the venue, the wedding planner switching the phone’s location to his other ear as he lowered the blinds for the front windows. “Off-white napkins have been ordered with the request of you and your husband’s names on the right corners. All we’re waiting for is the confirmation of the Mediterranean option on the menu before we print those. As soon as those come in--oh another call? I understand; I’ll see you next week. Goodbye!”

The phone was dropped into the black capris the man wore, Suga pausing at the mirror along the wall to check his appearance. Though he always looked professional when he was working, the fair-haired man had spent more time this morning picking out his date outfit than his work clothes. Maybe he chose a pair of pants that Oikawa had told him always accentuated some of his finer ‘assets’. The bright green button up tossed over the white t-shirt gave the outfit some color, matching the watch and sneakers the man rarely wore. The summer outfit felt comfortable yet gave Suga a boost of confidence, fixing his hair before he smiled back at his reflection.

Suga would be lying if he said he hadn’t been thinking about the date all week. When someone kissed you as thoroughly as Daichi had, it was hard not to. He made sure that the two kept in communication over the past few days, confirming they were both in agreement on time and location. It had been Daichi who suggested the newly opened Italian restaurant in town, a place that Suga had been dying to try. What better time than this? It felt like a celebration, after all; the wedding planner hadn’t been on a real date in two years. Though he was nervous to mess something up, the excitement of finally getting to explore the chemistry between him and the officer was quick to douse his fears. Daichi was a sweet man who seemed just as out of the dating game as Suga. If he messed something up, he doubted his date would judge him for it.
Taking a quick glance at his watch, Suga swept across the floor in order to leave the venue, turning to lock the door behind him.

“Don’t you look cute?” The purr of a question made Suga jump, nearly dropping his key before he fumbled to catch it. Turning his head toward the intruder, the wedding planner let out a sigh of relief when realizing his assistant was the one now taking in Suga’s appearance. “You’re even wearing the pants that make straight men question themselves. My, my, Suga-kun, you’re playing unfair tonight.”

“What are you doing here?” Suga asked, Oikawa rolling his eyes before he pointed toward the entrance.

“Stopping you from locking the door; I left my new charger in your office.”

“You remembered to go home and switch the laundry over first, right?” Since the break-in at Suga’s home, the tailor had taken it upon himself to provide ‘security’ for his boss. More often than not, Oikawa could be found creating a disaster in Suga’s kitchen or making himself comfortable sprawled out in front of the television. Suga didn’t complain, enjoying the company. Being alone in his apartment still felt uncomfortable, and the man had been spending more time at the venue when knowing Tooru would be working late. If the brunet noticed it, he didn’t comment, focusing on the lack of sugary cereal the wedding planner kept stocked in his home.

“Of course I did. I even turned off the television that someone forgot they left on this morning.”

“You are quite the godsend,” Suga replied, trying to keep his eye roll hidden when his friend gave a dramatic sigh.

“Well not all of us can be whisked away on a magical date. Someone has to stay level-headed while you’re off daydreaming.”

“Says the serial dater,” Was Suga’s reply, amused at the quick shake of Oikawa’s pretty head.

“I’ll have you know that despite the high demand of my attention from my admirers, my mind has been focused on my job in order to support my very underappreciating boss—”

“Didn’t you go on a date with Iwaizumi-san a week ago?” Suga’s interruption was met with a gasp
from Oikawa, though it didn’t stop the mischievous owner from continuing. “A romantic stroll on
the beach—”

“That wasn’t a date!”

“Are you waiting for him to ask you on another one?” It had been years since Suga had seen the
particular shade of pink now dusting Oikawa’s cheeks.

“You make everyone think you’re so sweet, but you’re a sugar monster!” The tailor glared and
scowled at his boss, who let out a tired sigh while making his slow descent down the front stairs.

“I just think that you and Iwaizumi-san make a good looking couple. Not to mention that he’s a
sweet guy, and he seems to really care about you. Would a second date be the worst way to spend
your night?” Finally, Suga stopped his movements, peeking his gaze over his shoulder to take in
the squint of his tailor’s eyes and nose. The look expressed the obvious confliction from his friend,
a man who avoided expressing true emotions. Knowing that Oikawa was not ready to speak about
the topic at hand, Suga turned back to the parking lot, catching the sight of headlights down the
driveway. It was a little troubling that his heart sped up from the sight of the car, though the worry
was washed away by awe when Daichi stepped out of the vehicle.

Daichi looked...amazing. The jeans that Daichi wore rivaled the perfect fit of Suga’s capris, hazel
eyes lingering on the thighs of his date with little shame. A blue checkered button-up covered a
black tank-top, broad shoulders filling out the shirts nicely. His longer sleeves were rolled up,
though they seemed unable to push past the well-defined bicep of the officer. The short hair meant
little styling, giving Daichi a wholesome look that Suga grew envious of. He made sexy seem so
simple. The look reached perfection when brown eyes finally located his own, a white smile
turning Suga’s stomach to a puddle of warmth. Even as the man approached with a wave, the
wedding planner couldn’t keep the butterflies from fluttering.

“I’m going to guess that you don’t skip leg day, Thighchi.” Oikawa’s lewd comment snapped Suga
from his silent gawking, quick to catch the pink hue on the tan officer’s face.

“Nice to see you too, Oikawa.”

“I mean seriously, I’d be petrified to give you a blowjob. You’d crush my head with those things,
but what a way to go.”
“Tooru!” Suga’s voice rose at the comment, the tailor seeming unaffected by the warning glance his boss gave him. Instead, the taller man sauntered over to the uneasy Daichi, his eyes losing their playful tone when leaning into his personal space.

“Since this is the first date, I feel I must ask what your intentions are with our Suga-kun.” The implication was easy to understand for all involved, Oikawa tipping his lips into a smirk at the sudden cough of the cop in front of him. “We do have a very important wedding tomorrow, and I can’t have my precious wedding planner walking around with a limp.”

“It’s just dinner,” Daichi answered quickly, receiving a quirked eyebrow from the brunet in front of him.

“Is that what you kids are calling it these days?”

“Okay, that’s enough.” Suga’s face matched the red cheeks of his date as he stepped between the two, snatching Daichi’s hand in his own as he sent a warning look to his co-worker. “We’re leaving.”

“Aw, but I didn’t even get to give him ‘the talk’ yet! I practiced on Kuroo and everything-”

“Don’t wait up for me, I’ll be home late.” Not pausing for Oikawa’s reply, Suga moved away from the tailor, hoping that his firm tone would ward the mischievous co-worker away. He made sure to mumble several forms of apology to Daichi as the two moved into his car, the fair-haired man only glancing back at Tooru when the two pulled out of the venue.

Too far away, Suga didn’t hear the ‘I need your help’ spoken quietly into the phone now pressed against Oikawa’s ear.

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“So you were the stereotypical popular jock in school?” The teasing tone in Suga’s voice matched his playful glance over the table, watching Daichi swallow his mouthful of food before he gave a sheepish grin.

“I was really good at sports, especially volleyball. But I’ve been told by Asahi that I was a little oblivious to the people who fawned over me junior and senior year. My focus was getting to the
“Somehow, this information doesn’t surprise me.” Enjoying the warm atmosphere easily spun between the two, Suga grabbed a few pieces of his shrimp scampi before popping the delicious meal into his mouth. The choice of coming to the new restaurant paid off, the wedding planner savoring the delicious blend of spices filling his mouth. He hummed at the taste, feeling his toes flex in pleasure. The busy wedding season meant more take-out than real food, so the Italian dish was an overdue treat. Daichi’s laugh was small but caught the attention of the fair-haired man, quick to realize his date’s eyes were focused on him. “What’s funny?”

“Nothing,” Daichi answered, seeming to wait for Suga to take a sip from his wine glass to speak. “How about you? What group did you belong to in high school?”

“I didn’t really fit in a specific group. There were too many nice people in different clubs to only pick one. I did win ‘most friendly’ my senior year, though.”

“Some things haven’t changed, I see.” The warm smile Daichi sent his way made Suga’s face heat up, hazel eyes flickering down to the tan hand resting on the table. Not thinking twice, Suga moved his own hand, letting his fingers intertwine with the officer’s when he gave a shrug. He hoped his voice didn’t waver when he turned his attention back up to Daichi’s face, giving a bright grin.

“I probably would have avoided letting a super popular jock take me out to dinner back then.”

“Then I guess a little change is a good thing.” The bashful looks toward each other didn’t dislodge their hands, digits seeming content to stay woven together on the table. Suga took a moment to collect his thoughts, watching the glow of the table’s candle illuminate Daichi’s face. Brown eyes that had captured the wedding planner’s attention since day one looked dark in the dim light, though they felt warm to Suga. Letting his thumb brush the tough skin of Daichi’s, Suga’s eyelashes fluttered as he glanced down to his plate.

“You know, something’s been bothering me ever since I first met your rambunctious crew.”

“They’re not aliens, I promise.” Suga laughed at Daichi’s words, shaking his head to show that wasn’t where his thoughts had trailed.

“I just want to know how you all became friends. You’re all so diverse, I can’t imagine a storyline
which explains how you all met.” It was obvious that Daichi was thrown off by the question, Suga’s explanation quick to rush from pink lips. “I’ve been trying to figure it out for weeks, and I still can’t crack the code.”

“I guess it’d be complicated for someone on the outside looking in.” The officer admitted, collecting another bite of his food before speaking again. “Well, I’ll start with the easier side of the wedding party. Asahi, Tsukishima, and I played volleyball together in high school, and I met Iwaizumi through the police academy. Iwaizumi and Asahi both played as aces on their high school teams, so they were quick to bond over their love of the position. And you already know about the, uh, eccentric meeting of Asahi and Noya in the grocery store.”

“That’s a hard story to forget.” Suga’s lips quirked at the memory of Noya’s happy face when telling the fated meet up between him and his fiancé.

“As for the others…” Daichi’s attention went to his own glass, taking a slow swig that caused Suga’s attention to sway to his bobbing Adam’s apple. Aware of the twitch in his thighs at the motion, the fair-haired man peeked back up to concentrate on Daichi’s face. “Noya and Tanaka don’t quite remember how they met.”

“Oh?”

“According to Noya, the two were at the same freshman party and got drunk to the point that they woke up with identical permanent marker drawings on their faces. They took it as a sign of fate, became best friends and eventually business partners afterward.” Suga had to place his hand over his lips to keep himself from laughing at the ridiculous story Daichi was giving him. Not seeming satisfied with his response, Daichi shook his head and continued. “Shouyou went into said shop as their first customer. They were so happy to see someone, they gave him their numbers and a ton of free stuff for his car which ended up costing them more money than the wheel rotation covered. Shouyou was so enamored by them, he started calling them ‘senpais’ and the two basically adopted him as their son. As for Ennoshita-”

“I’m almost scared to ask,” Suga said, the look on Daichi’s face proving he should be.

“According to Ennoshita, Tanaka ran him over with his bike in high school and broke his arm. Tanaka claims a rabid cat was chasing him and he didn’t see Ennoshita until his arm jammed his tire. To make up for it, Tanaka and Noya became Ennoshita’s ‘bodyguards’ for the rest of the year and scared off half of Ennoshita’s friends. He’s been babysitting them ever since.”

“Oh my god!” The bouts of laughter that spilled from Suga’s mouth was impossible to control, his
eyes watering in pure joy. He was sure a few people were watching his sudden case of giggles, yet the planner couldn’t contain himself. And he thought his friendships were weird. The time it took to control his giggles stretched well over a minute, yet Suga couldn’t feel embarrassed when focusing his tear-filled eyes on Daichi. “I wasn’t expecting that.”

“They are a strange bunch.” Letting out a small chuckle, Daichi nibbled on the food on his fork before continuing.

“We’ve been through hell and back a few times. I’ll admit I wasn’t always sure we’d all make it, but we survived. There were a few close calls...I swear Noya and Tanaka will be the death of me.”

“I could see that.” Yet even with the agreeance, Suga’s smile stayed on his lips. Hazel eyes admired the officer in front of him, his strength being only one highlight of his charming personality. He cared about his friends, and took on their problems no matter how stressful it was for him. From the instances that Suga had the pleasure of being around the group, he knew they were no easy walk in the park. Fun, yes, but enough to cause the most patient of men to question murder. Yet Daichi willingly stood by them, giving them structure without controlling their lives. It all culminated into the wonderful man sitting across from him, brown eyes reflecting confusion as they stared back at Suga.

“Are you okay?”

“Oh, yes!” Waving his free hand with a laugh, the wedding planner was quick to change the subject. “Though I must ask, do you ever regret meeting them?”

“Not really. Even with the stress, I enjoy their company and they keep me young.” The casual answer was paired with Daichi’s foot bumping into Suga’s under the table, his low tone and honest expression surprising the fair-haired man. “And if I hadn’t been their friends, I wouldn’t be sitting here with you. I think it’s worth some grey hair.”

After the embarrassing admission, Daichi’s head lowered, his concentration suddenly filled with the scraps of food left on his plate. Suga was wide-eyed and speechless, his cheeks pink and heart swollen with warmth. It felt effortless to fall for such sweet words, and Suga couldn’t hide the modest smile now tickling the side of his lips. Eyes swept back to the linked fingers still resting on the table, squeezing the hand gently. Daichi didn’t pull away, but the wedding planner’s angle allowed him to see the reddened tips of the officer’s ears. Knowing that Daichi was in the same boat as him felt comforting, and Suga submerged himself in the giddy feeling before turning his quiet attention back to his plate.
“When did the King of Horrible-Pick-Up-Lines get so smooth? And why is Suga-kun falling for it?!" Oikawa’s frown was pronounced under the big sunglasses and teal hoodie, the brunet staring at the couple from across the dining room. The tailor’s table was hidden closer to the patio of the restaurant, though he made sure to get a location where he would be able to watch his boss’s date from a distance. Pressing his sunglasses closer to his face, Tooru leaned over the back of his chair in order to get a better glance at the two now quietly distracting themselves with their dinners. The scene made Oikawa scoff, though the snort soon after did not come from his mouth.

“You told me there was an emergency.” Turning back to the table, the tailor-made a noise of complaint to the officer’s words.

“Iwa-chan, this is an emergency!!”

“We’re stalking your boss on his date with my partner. I’ve yet to hear their crime.” A dark eyebrow arched his way made Oikawa pout, pulling the sunglasses down so that Iwaizumi could see his serious stare.

“Suga-kun hasn’t been on a date for years. And if I had ever suggested that the person who would break that celibacy would be the best man in one of our weddings, he would have my gorgeous head on a platter. This is starting to look like a Code Sunglow!”

“You were that kid who had the 64 crayon box, weren’t you?”

“120 with the sharpener in the back,” Oikawa answered instantly, making Iwaizumi roll his eyes.

“Why the hell are you so scared of Sugawara dating Sawamura? You know he’s not a jackass.” At the question, Oikawa shook his head, the hoodie shifting away from his head as he answered.

“I’m not against it.”

“Then why are we here?”

“Because I want to make sure that your very masculine co-worker doesn’t try to do something I would do.”
“Sawamura’s crazy about your boss and you know that. A quick fling isn’t what he’s looking for. So what’s really going on with you, Asskawa?” Oikawa didn’t look at his companion, the shades doing well in covering his small wince at the question. It wasn’t that he disliked seeing the two men together; it had been years since he had seen Suga smile this much. Though he thought Daichi was a little too vanilla for his taste, he could see why his boss had taken a liking to him. The two looked truly happy at their table, and Oikawa had no doubt that Daichi was a gentleman. If he wanted to be honest, their chemistry felt like they knew each other for years, not months. There was no reason for Tooru to be crouched over a table in a disguise that wouldn’t fail a blind man. And yet…

“You talk too much for a stakeout. They’ll discover our location.” The statement made the officer groan, rubbing his temple with two of his fingers.

“Stakeouts aren’t like this, idiot. Most are long, boring, and end up with us smelling like a boy’s locker room. If we had to be quiet too, I’d probably shoot someone before our target even showed up.”

“You’ve done an actual stakeout?” Curious, Oikawa turned to face Iwaizumi, deciding to shed his sunglasses in order to see the other man properly.

“A couple, actually. Not my favorite thing to do, but it’s part of the job.”

“Oh, tell me!” The sour look on Iwaizumi’s face didn’t dissuade Oikawa from leaning onto their table, resting his chin on linked hands with a sly grin. “Seduce me with your sexy stakeout stories.”

“I’m telling you there’s nothing sexy about it.” With a shake of his head, the officer leaned back in his chair, tilting his chin up as he thought about Oikawa’s request. “Sawamura and I had one that lasted close to twelve hours. A federal criminal had escaped a nearby facility, and there was talk his current girlfriend lived in town. We sat on her house until the idiot showed up and we cuffed him on the spot.”

“That’s super intense, Iwa-chan.”

“Not the worst I’ve seen.” There was a weird note to Iwaizumi’s voice that made the tailor hesitate in his response. The man had yet to look back at Oikawa, so the brunet was unable to read his companion’s expression. Yet even as he lips started to move again, his words didn’t feel as playful as he wanted them to.
“What’s worse than a federal criminal? The boogeyman?”

“...Something like that.” The officer’s lower voice struck the bottom of Tooru’s spine, making him sit straighter.

“Ah, well...” Suddenly his mouth felt dry, and any plan to speak fell to the back of his mind. Instead, the tailor sat silently, waiting for Iwaizumi to explain his cryptic statement.

“Last December, we got a call the second hour into our patrol. A fourteen-year-old girl had been dragged into a car outside of her school by a man none of her friends recognized. Our unit worked fast to get descriptions from the classmates, as well as a description of the car. We were able to make a positive identification for a level three sex offender who recently moved back into town. Units were dispatched to his apartment, as well as a storage unit under his name and a car garage he once owned on the outskirts of town.

“We were sent to check the garage. The door was boarded up and the windows barred shut; it looked deserted upon the first inspection. Sawamura’s the one who discovered the back door. We found her handcuffed to a bed with part of her throat slit open. I had just taken a refresher course at the station for first aid, so I told Sawamura to call in a priority 2 for the EMTs while I tried to control the bleeding with my shirt. I worked under the assumption that the man had fled the scene when hearing us. We made a rookie mistake and didn’t clear the scene first. A knife in my bicep was the result; the man had been hiding in the room the whole time. Before he could stab me again, Sawamura shot him.”

“Oh my god.” Tooru’s whisper was shaky as he tried to process the words, though the hard pound in his chest proved the story had affected him. Finally, the green eyes of Iwaizumi dropped down to the tailor, his serious stare momentarily pausing Oikawa’s breath.

“Both survived, the girl more a miracle than anything. There’s a trial set up for her abductor in the fall.” Shrugging off his jacket, Iwaizumi rolled up his sleeve and turned his right arm to expose the back of his bicep.

“You’ve got a scar.” Entranced by the long line that looked drawn on Iwaizumi’s muscle, Oikawa slowly reached his hand to touch the raised skin. The scar was smooth under the fingertips, the tailor quietly stroking the marred skin while glancing back up to Iwaizumi. “You really got stabbed.”
“Yeah. I got sixteen stitches and was out of duty for a week. They wanted me to take longer, but there was no nerve damage to the muscles, so I refused.”

“Why would you not take the time?” Scowling up at Iwaizumi, he pressed his palm to the mark and gave a short shake of his head. “Why would you go back at all? Iwa-chan, you big dummy. You nearly got—”

“Because that’s why I became a cop.” Iwaizumi’s fierce tone cut off Oikawa’s comment, his steady gaze never wavering when staring at the brunet. It did, however, soften, Iwaizumi taking a slow breath before he continued. “When she was released from the hospital, I sat outside her house with Daichi each night for a month. It was on our own time; neither one of us got paid for it. But it was the only way she could get to sleep; seeing our car outside made her feel like the man couldn’t hurt her again. She’s better now, but we still take her out once a month for lunch to check in. We tell her about some of the stupid calls we get, and she tells us about how much she hates algebra and which boy she finds cute this week. I told you before, I don’t do this job because I want credit or because it makes me feel better. I do it so people can feel safe even when bad things happen to them.”

Oh. Oikawa’s whole body vibrated in his seat, feeling a sudden desire to jump over the table and smash his mouth against the officer’s. His fingers twitched on the muscle under his grasp, and he was sure his heart was going to carve out a hole in his chest to escape from. Tooru was swept up in the flurry of feelings spreading through his limbs. This wasn’t lust, though he was sure his body wouldn’t mind grinding into the sturdy abs of the man across the table. He forced himself to breathe normally despite his lungs gasping for air, the lightheaded feeling lingering in his head worrisome. The restaurant felt too hot, his cheeks surely red from the sudden burst of warmth. Yet all the brunet wanted to do to the man opening up so honestly to him was press every inch of their bodies together. It wasn’t just about sex; the thought of simply being cuddled, being kissed, being held by Iwaizumi while he told him more stories of his life had Tooru’s mind swimming. He felt like a teenager with a foolish crush! What was wrong with him?

And why was he okay with it?

“Ah, e-excuse me.” A feminine voice caught Tooru’s ear, the tailor slowly taking his gaze away from Iwaizumi to look up at the waitress next to the table. He blinked slowly when a plate was placed in front of him, the waitress dropping the second plate in front of Iwaizumi before she stepped back quickly. “Here is your food. If you need anything else, please don’t hesitate to ask.”

“Food?” Oikawa questioned, though a quick look to his companion proved that Iwaizumi wasn’t as confused.

“Thank you.” Waiting until the waitress scampered away, the officer picked up his utensils and
started to cut the chicken sitting over his pasta. “Before you ask, I ordered it when you went to the bathroom earlier.”

“Why?” In response, Iwaizumi lifted his hand, counting his fingers as he spoke.

“Number one, your stomach started growling about ten minutes into our ‘stakeout’. Two, we’d been here close to a half hour and only ordered water. And three, I’m pretty sure Daichi knew we were here the whole time. They snuck out about five minutes ago.”

“What?!?” Turning back to look at the table his boss had been sitting at, Oikawa bit back a swear when realizing that Iwaizumi was telling the truth. Both seats were empty, and he could clearly see a receipt for their dinner sitting on the table.

“You suck at this stakeout thing.” Embarrassed when realizing that he had been distracted by Iwaizumi, the tailor huffed in protest and turned back to cross his arms defiantly.

“Yeah, well...you suck at asking people on dates.” Why this was the first thing that came to the assistant’s mind, he wasn’t sure, but the bluntness of his statement didn’t cause the officer to laugh. Instead, Iwaizumi shrugged, lifting his fork toward his mouth.

“Probably; most of the time, people come up to me first.” Using the opportunity to switch back into his flirty defense, Oikawa leaned over the table, snagging the bite of food from Iwaizumi’s utensil. The motion brought the two within inches of each other, the sly tailor licking his bottom lip slowly when noticing the other man’s eyes dropped down to look at his mouth.

“I always thought you’d be a man who liked to take control.” He made sure to purr the last part of the statement, smirking at the sudden blush that started to infiltrate the officer’s cheeks. Grimacing, Iwaizumi made a show of rolling his eyes before he used his now empty fork to push on Oikawa’s forehead, forcing the man back into his seat.

“And I always thought it was rude to fall asleep on a first date.” The comment threatened to make Oikawa blush, so the tailor looked around for something to switch the conversation to. His eyes fell on the linguini noodles in front of him, surprised to realize that it was almost identical to the order he had placed the night they had made centerpieces. Seeming to read his mind, Iwaizumi swallowed his bite of food and shrugged. “If you liked it once, I was sure you’d like it again. Wasn’t really a hard order to remember. I just got regular alfredo sauce, though, because I didn’t know if you’d like the meat sauce they made here.”
“Iwa-chan, you should know I’d like any meat you gave me.” The sexual joke was out in seconds, and the sound of Iwaizumi choking on his food was enough to make Tooru laugh. Though he tended to snicker or giggle at times, it was rare for the tailor to truly find something amusing. But here, as Iwaizumi’s face flushed a pretty shade of red while he sent a death glare at Tooru, the brunet’s laughter was genuine. He was so amused by the innocent reaction, he couldn’t stop the snort that escaped his nose, which only made the tailor laugh even more. Iwaizumi’s murderous gaze morphed into surprise, which was quick to quiet the lingering laughter from Oikawa. “What’s wrong?”

“I’ve never heard you laugh like that before,” Iwaizumi admitted, the tailor hesitating before he shrugged and brushed his bangs away with his hand.

“I’m not a big fan of it. Even someone a perfect me as has an Achilles heel.”

“It’s better than most of the noise that comes from your mouth.”

“That’s rude, Iwa-chan!”

“Shut up.” The officer turned his face back toward his meal, though Oikawa was sure he was still talking to him.

“You should do it more often, dumbass.”

“I...should?” The officer nodded once before lifting his fork, his voice barely audible.

“It was nice.” Then he was back to devouring his food, being distracted by the waitress who came back to ask about the dinner. Despite Iwaizumi’s attention not being on him, Oikawa continued to stare, wondering if his heartbeat would ever go back to normal. He had a feeling if he continued to hang out with Iwaizumi, it wouldn’t. Somehow, this gruff man had started his unintentional breach of Oikawa’s emotional wall, gaining ground with each day spent together.

And the warm feeling that curled around Oikawa’s heart at the thought terrified him.

~*~
For Kenma, being beside Kuroo was more of an expectation than a decision on his part. When they were younger, it was easier to find the blond at his older friend’s house, even on school nights. Summers meant that the two were attached at the hip, Kuroo dragging his quiet friend on several adventures he hadn’t asked to go on. When Kuroo has expressed his growing fascination with photography, Kenma hadn’t said much. Instead, he began to learn about the digital aspects of editing, and when the time came, put his skills to use to better enhance Kuroo’s natural talent. It was never a question as to what he was going to do with his career after that; so long as Kuroo continued to take pictures, Kenma would be there to support him.

That didn’t mean that the work was easy. The current job, which Kenma had been working on for nearly two hours, was looking like it would take all night to complete. The greek wedding had been a once in a lifetime experience, with one of the biggest guests lists that Little Crows had ever held. The groom and bride were a well-matched pair, both adoring the flash of a camera. This resulted in hundreds of pictures from Kuroo, who always aimed to please his customers any way he could. Kenma, consequently, was left with the responsibility of going through each picture in order to see which would make it to the photo album. The screen was starting to hurt his eyes from how long he had been staring at it, yet he dutifully clicked to the next photo in order to make his notes.

At least he had one thing to look forward to. Kuroo, realizing how much work he had inadvertently made for his friend, offered to go grab dinner for them. They had food in the home they could cook, but Kenma had been quick to turn down the idea. As it was, the house was sweltering. The end of May was normally a happy medium between cool and hot, yet this Monday evening refused to follow protocol. Being forced into his summer clothes, Kenma closed his eyes when the fan on his desk blasted cooler air across his face. The two hadn’t thought to put their air conditioners in, so the old fan was the only thing that helped give relief to the editor. Except from the slower pace it used to rotate, Kenma was sure it was about to run out of power.

“Why would Kuroo buy a fan that runs on batteries? Probably because it was cheap.” Giving a slow sigh, Kenma uncurled himself from the computer chair in order to push to stand. His arms stretched over his head slowly, a yawn catching his lips as he walked toward the photographer’s room. Kuroo tended to keep the batteries on the top shelf of the kitchen, a place that Kenma struggled to gain access to. Height was something that Kuroo liked to hang over his shorter friend, and the editor was sure it gave him a confidence boost when Kenma had to ask for help. That was why Kenma had bought a step stool, making the snickering roommate keep it in his closet. He had yet to actually use it, as Kuroo was always by his side.

The room, to Kenma’s surprise, was always clean. Despite his messy hair and lazy personality, Kuroo kept his personal items clean. Even the bed was made, a feat that Kenma struggled with every day. The walls were filled with pictures and awards from different contests, and the blonde admired his friend’s artistic work before sauntering into the large closet. The dim light gave little guidance for the editor, making his search for the buried step stool a challenge. In contrast to the neat room, the walk-in needed some attention. Never being the one to take care of the cleaning, the editor rarely had reason to go into the closet. And despite it being Kuroo’s closet, he seemed to use it as more of a storage unit than a place to hang clothes. Pushing past the vacuum and ironing
board, Kenma’s golden eyes fell onto the red step stool tipped over on the floor.

Before he could reach it, however, his shoulder shoved into the mop, knocking over a few books sitting on Kuroo’s shelf. Kenma was quick to cover his head, thankful when none of them made contact with him. Slow to peek an eye open, Kenma sighed when realizing the bigger mess he had made. One glance to the shelf above him proved he was too short to put the books back, so the editor kneeled down and piled them to the side. Most of the fallen debris were books on photography and filmography from the few classes Kuroo had taken before his business picked up. He glanced over most of the covers without a second thought, though his curiosity piqued when catching a glimpse of a different style book. The photo album looked old, though larger than most of the ones that the two worked with. The red and black coloring of the cover was pretty, and Kenma’s fingertips ran over lettering he couldn’t read in the closet. Snagging the photo album, Kenma made his way to the brighter lights of Kuroo’s bedroom. Kenma slowly crawled into the middle of the bed, making himself comfortable before turning his attention to the mysterious book. And when finally catching the title of the album in the light, Kenma’s eyes widened.

“Kitten?” It took a few seconds for the editor to wrap his fingers around the corner of the cover, slowly opening the large album in front of it. And like the title implied, the page was filled with pictures of...him. He was much younger in the photos, high school if he had to guess. These were slightly faded and looked like they were taken from a disposable camera or polaroid. Some were from their time in school, some during their summer vacations. The tips of the photos were ripped or worn as if they had been through several moves. Exposure and water damage were apparent in some, the pictures looking more cared for as Kenma flipped through the glossy pages. Kenma could tell when Kuroo had switched cameras, the angles and professional look of the pictures adapting over time. The years went past their high school careers, and some in the back looked as recent as the previous month. But still, the topic of each photo remained the same; Kenma was the star.

But the photos weren’t the only thing found in the album. The curvy loops of Kuroo’s writing littered the bottom of some of the pages, barely changing throughout the years. Dates were scattered on the pages like reminders for the photographer. There were short phrases under certain images, some seeming code for only his roommates to know. But there were others that were clear as day to Kenma. Adjectives like ‘cute’ and ‘charming’ made it hard for Kenma to focus, squirming in his spot on the bed. His fingers flipped another page, cheeks starting to glow as an image of his sleeping face appeared. But it was the words ‘the moment I fell’ confused him. What did that mean? He looked down at the date, trying to remember why it was so important. The photo took place in Kuroo’s senior year, and the editor remembered he had spent most of that winter snowed in at Kuroo’s house. But other than that, the picture meant nothing to him.

“Hello?” Kuroo’s call from the living room made Kenma jump, the editor glancing up at the doorway of the bedroom. He knew he should have responded to the photographer, yet his mouth stayed silent. The small hands pressed the album down in his lap, unsure why he felt the need to tighten his grasp. Kenma kept his gaze on the doorway, patiently waiting for his roommate to finally find him. The call of his name was heard twice before the editor finally caught a glimpse of messy black hair. The surprise in Kuroo’s face was small when he poked his head into the room. It
was no secret that the blond sometimes opted to sleep in the less cluttered mattress of his roommate. A slow smile shifted Kuroo’s lips, the tall man easing himself into the room. “Ah, there you are.”

“Mhm.” The small noise was muffled between tight lips, Kenma quick to glance toward the floor when Kuroo sat on the edge of the bed.

“Taking a nap?”

“No, needed batteries. The stool was in your closet.” The arched eyebrow was teasing from Kuroo, nudging his elbow into Kenma’s bent knee.

“Yet here you sit with no height enhancer. So what did you find?” But the humor that edged the man’s voice was quick to die out when glancing to Kenma’s lap, a rare look of apprehension crossing his features. It was obvious what the man was looking at, and Kenma brushed some of his hair behind his ear to hide his anxiety.

“I found this and I...I’d just never seen this before.” The invasion of privacy suddenly bore into Kenma’s mind, and he tried not to let his sudden panic waver his rushed voice. “I didn’t mean to intrude, it fell down when I was in there. I’m sorry.”

“You didn’t get hurt, did you?”

“No.”

“That’s a relief.” Despite the large palm now smoothing over his blond locks, Kenma refused to look back up at his roommate. Was he angry? It wouldn’t be out of the realm of possibilities. Kenma had trespassed in his room and went through his things without his permission. He had done something inexcusable to someone he truly cared for. Why wouldn’t Kuroo lash out at him? The man could only take so much. After everything the photographer had supported him through, the ways he had changed his life for the editor, and this was how he repaid him? Would Kuroo want him to move? The thought made Kenma’s breath catch, his stomach twisting in instant protest. He didn’t want that.

“Kenma, look at me.”
“Can’t.” There was a quiet panic to his voice that made his shoulders hunch forward and his teeth burrow into his lower lip.

“You can. Just take your time.” There was a comfort whispered in Kuroo’s response, lips pressed against Kenma’s flushed temple. Patiently the photographer waited, continuing to stroke the smaller man’s head to reassure him. The guilt still swelled inside him, but Kenma forced two slow breaths and counted to ten before slowly looking up to Kuroo. There was a gleam of pride in Kuroo’s stare despite the shaky voice proving he was still off-kilter from the album discovery. In Kenma’s mind, he was sure the man was simply trying to hide his anger. “Good job, kitten. Told ya you could do it.”

“You don’t have to hold back,” Kenma replied, making Kuroo tense at the words. Bracing himself for the onslaught, the editor took a quiet breath before nodding. “I know you’re upset.”

“I wouldn’t say upset. This just wasn’t exactly how I planned to tell you.” The strange response sent Kenma’s voice scurrying into hiding, struggling to keep his eyes on the man now scratching the back of his own head.

“Guess the cat’s out of the bag, huh?”

“Kuroo?”

“Let me see that.” The gentle command was easy for Kenma to follow, Kuroo moving to sit behind his tense roommate while opening the album again. The chest that pressed into Kenma’s back left him shivering despite the heat emanating from Kuroo. Both arms rested around Kenma’s waist, a thumb lazily thumbing through the glossed pages. “I never told you when I became interested in photography, did I?”

“No,” Kenma answered quietly, still unsure of where the conversation was going. The limbs located around his waist had tremors running through them, yet the photographer’s face held a small smile that showed no anger. Instead, his relaxed gazed swiped through a page of photos, his finger tapping onto one of the photographs that Kenma had skimmed before.

“It was here.” In the editor’s opinion, there was nothing special about the picture. Maybe that was why he hadn’t noticed the caption ‘The moment I knew’ written beneath it. The dimness of the porch made a weird glare appear on the right corner of the picture, blurring some of the beautiful colors of the sunrise in the background. Kuroo’s angle was strange, and Kenma was sure it was shot from a damaged camera. Like the other pictures, the blonde was center stage, his sleepy eyes glued to the DS screen that sat in his sleeping bag. A quick glance to the side of the page proved
that Kenma was a few months shy of fifteen, explaining the horrible first attempt at bleaching his hair. With a bad case of bed head and Kuroo’s borrowed t-shirt slanting off his shoulder, Kenma immediately thought he looked ridiculous. He felt himself blush when he realized part of his boxers peeked out from the oversized shirt. The scene was common for the two, tending to sleep outside whenever the summer weather permitted it. All in all, the picture seemed boring and caused Kenma to look back to the man now resting his chin on the editor’s shoulder in confusion.

“I don’t...understand.”

“I always liked taking pictures of you. At first, it was to make fun of you, since you always took yourself too seriously.”

“I had to with immature friends like you,” Kenma countered, Kuroo’s ugly snicker scrunching the blonde’s nose in annoyance. The older man nuzzled the tip of Kenma’s ear, his voice low when responding.

“But then I took this picture and I realized how beautiful you really were. Being able to capture that with one picture was...life-changing.” The raw honesty ricocheting in Kuroo’s words made Kenma’s eyes widen, his shoulders tensing from shock. His roommate didn’t seem bothered by the response, flipping more pages at a leisurely pace. “I told you; I like to take pictures of the things I find beautiful. You were the reason for that.”

“But I’m not-”

“And this one.” Kuroo didn’t let Kenma deny his statement, tapping a new page in the album. For the second time, Kenma was introduced to the winter picture of him asleep on Kuroo’s bed. The cryptic caption was read in silence, but it seemed his roommate was one step ahead of his confusion. “This was the night I realized I was in love with you.”

“What?” Now turning to look back at the photographer, Kenma searched his features for any hint of jest or lying. The eyes that stared down at him were open and genuine, leaving Kenma unable to deny the admission now presented to him. Little fingers grasped onto one of the arms around him, trying to keep himself grounded. The news was a shock, and Kenma nervously squirmed between the older man’s legs. He wasn’t sure if he was fighting against a frown or a smile, but having Kuroo’s full concentration was a bit overwhelming. Casting his gaze away, Kenma finally spoke. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“Because I understand your anxiety makes you avoid stressful situations. If I told you, you’d worry about creating conflict with me and may simply accept my feelings without thinking of your own.”
The amount of thought that Kuroo had put into the situation proved that this wasn’t a fleeting feeling for his friend. He was serious, and the care he put into his decision made Kenma’s cheeks warm. “You doing okay with all of this?”

“I’m...I’m not sure how I’m supposed to feel. It’s...a lot.” The whispered confession was quiet, but Kenma knew his roommate heard him when a familiar hand was pressed to his head.

“Do you dislike it?”

“Not really.” And that was the truth, despite the quiet words he used. Even though he was unsure how he felt about someone like Kuroo thinking of him in a romantic way, it didn’t disgust him. Love had always been genderless for him. At the end of the day, Kuroo was his still best friend, even if it was a little harder to meet his gaze now.

“Then take the time to think the situation over. The last thing I want for you to do is give me an answer you’re not happy with. I’ve had years to accept this, so I’m in no rush; talk it over with the shrimp or whoever you need to. I’ll wait for you.” The lack of pressure in Kuroo’s voice was a soothing wave on Kenma’s muscles, the editor’s body relaxing at the words.

“Okay.” He gave a simple and quick response, a familiar grin appearing on Kuroo’s face at the motion. There was a teasing edge to the photographer’s lips when he leaned down, the proximity of their mouth’s dwindling.

“Though I wouldn’t mind giving you a little food for thought.” The implication was obvious to the editor, golden eyes glancing up when a warm palm pressed to the side of his jaw. A few seconds passed between the two, neither moving their gazes from the others. Despite Kuroo’s bold declaration, he made no movement forward, seeming to search for something from his roommate. Acceptance, if the blond knew anything about his overprotective friend. Kuroo would never push Kenma into something that the editor wasn’t ready for. If Kenma turned him down, the older man would pull away in a heartbeat. Yet when he thought of the options presented to him, curiosity won out.

“Sure.” A shrug of his shoulder made Kuroo blink twice and pull back a few inches, the distance making Kenma’s pulse jump. Had this all just been a joke taken too far?

“Wait...really? You’re okay with me kissing you?” But the anxiety was easier than normal to extinguish by the look of excitement just hiding beneath Kuroo’s clarifying words. Unsure if his words would fail him, Kenma nodded before closing his eyes.
The softness that pressed against his lips was unsuspected for Kenma. Kuroo, the extravert that oozed unintended sexual energy, was made for sinful intimacy. It was all women and men alike talked about when being in his presence. But the gentle kiss that swept over his mouth was kind, lacking the seductive aura the photographer wore like a second skin. Fingers gently stroke the rounded chin as it tilted Kenma’s head up, Kuroo’s warmth seeping into the editor like it was meant to be there. The slowly building sensation had Kenma squeezing his eyes tighter, his fingers tightening on the arm still held captive in his grasp. Kuroo didn’t deepen the slow exchange, keeping the quiet kiss simple but sincere. Still, the taste of mint that presented itself when Kuroo’s lips parted slightly against Kenma’s made the blond shiver in his spot. Unsure of if he was meant to respond the same, Kenma leaned into the movement, opening his lips for only a second before shying away. Seeming to take this as a clue to end the moment, Kuroo closed his mouth and dipped his lips away from Kenma.

“Did I scare you?” The concerned question from Kuroo made the editor open his eyes and shake his head, though he questioned if the warmth rushing through him was normal. Kuroo’s relieved sigh was followed by Kuroo’s smile, the photographer moving away from his friend and back to his feet. “Good to hear. I’m going to warm our food up; come out when you’re ready.”

“Mhm.” The small noise was accepted by Kuroo, who stretched his arms over his head before exiting the bedroom. Kenma’s eyes followed him, waiting until the photographer was out of site to press his fingers to his mouth.

Quietly, he wondered if the tingling feeling still buzzing in his lips was a good thing or not.

Chapter End Notes

Love is all around! Now with the story rolling closer to the Wedding, things will start to really heat up with our lovable boys. Will Oikawa ever admit there's more going on with him and Iwaizumi? How will Kenma deal with the shift in he and Kuroo's relationship? Who will be next on this romantic merry go round? Find out next chapter, and kudos/comments are always welcome!

Next Chapter- Chasing Destiny
Chasing Destiny

Chapter Summary

Dinner, dessert, and a surprise that takes everyone by surprise.

Chapter Notes

Ahhhh hello again! Thank you all for the pouring support you have given me with this story, I can't say how much it keeps me going. So without further adieu, let's get this party started!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Yamaguchi was positive that he was dreaming. Even as he watched Tsukishima hand his credit card over to a waitress with curly blond hair and lingering eyes, the florist was positive that he was not awake. The night did match up with the Wednesday that the lawyer had left open for their dinner. The high-class restaurant that Yamaguchi now sat in looked far too expensive to ever eat at. It had to be a fantasy. But the particular glow in the eyes behind tilted glasses felt too smug for Yamaguchi’s mind to create. The flower child nervously glanced down to his plate, nothing but the juice from his steak gleaming on the white china. A dinner, his mind pointed out, that was paid for by Tsukishima. With nothing to distract him from reality, Yamaguchi tried to hide his blush by wiping his mouth with his napkin. But from the quiet arch of the blonde’s eyebrow when looking back to him, it was obvious his secret was out.

“Something wrong?” Instantly the florist shook his head, aware of the cowlick swaying with the movement. Even after the attempt to force the annoying piece of hair down, Yamaguchi knew it was standing just as proudly as it had all his life.

“No-nothing!” Embarrassment was clear in his tone, and the brunet mentally scolded himself while scrubbing his freckles harder. He needed to stop overreacting. Even if Tsukishima had bought dinner, that didn’t mean that it was a date. The implication may have been on the tip of his tongue of their last meeting, but neither had put an actual name to the outing. Didn’t the lawyer say something about this being a family tradition? What if he was just trying to make up for the argument between them? But if that was the case, why was Yamaguchi’s heart beating so fast? The reaction was immature; it wasn’t like the florist had never been treated to dinner before. He was an adult, and he couldn’t continue to act like a blushing virgin!

Even if he technically was just that.
Maybe it wouldn’t have felt like a date if the man currently signing their bill wasn’t being so polite. Though Tsukishima knew how to play nice when he needed to, Yamaguchi wasn’t used to his lack of snark and sarcasm. Instead, the man kept their conversation friendly, ignoring the opportunity to snap at the florist when he nearly knocked over his complimentary glass of wine. The menu had left Yamaguchi overwhelmed; why was half of it in greek? Or was that french? Either way, the freckled man was lost, and he knew it had been obvious the second the waitress came to take their order. Instead of leaving him to flop around like a fish out of water, Tsukishima took the time to explain some of the menu, allowing Yamaguchi to weigh his options when choosing. Their conversations through their meal were quiet but engaged, the two easily shifting between topics of work and hobbies with little silence. It didn’t feel fake or strained, either; Tsukishima seemed genuinely interested in Yamaguchi’s answers throughout the meal. The whole thing left Yamaguchi breathless even as Tsukishima led him out of the restaurant.

“You didn’t have to pay,” Yamaguchi said, peeking up at his companion as the two walked down the street. The blonde gave a hint of his normal sass with a roll of his eyes, though he managed to keep the sarcasm out of his voice.

“I was the one who asked you out tonight; paying for the meal is the expectation under these circumstances.” When he answered like that, it made it hard for Yamaguchi to think of the night as anything but a date. Too embarrassed to actually ask the question, the florist tucked his hands into his jacket pockets and looked forwards.

“Thank you,” He mumbled quietly, catching the shrug of lean shoulders from the corner of his eye.

“Hopefully I didn’t take time away from something important. You’ve been busy this week.” The mention of the increased workload made the shorter man sigh. Despite the noise, Yamaguchi’s lips still perked into a smile.

“That’s because June starts tomorrow. The wedding business gets really busy this time of year. It’s not too hot yet, but snow’s no longer a danger. Plus, the weather is the best for outdoor weddings. We make a lot of people’s dreams come true in June!”

“Hm.” The short hum did little to hint at what Tsukishima was thinking, but he didn’t leave the brunet in suspense for long. “Divorce rates are lower than average in June.”

“Well, I could have told you that. People get reminiscent about their weddings and the love they shared at that time, so the last thing on their minds is getting divorced.” To the wedding employee, the explanation made sense. The lawyer seemed less sold on the idea, giving a pointed stare before he made a scoffing noise.
“Show me the empirical evidence that proves your theory is valid.”

“I call it my gut intuition.”

“That is neither of the things I requested. Your theory is denied.” The flat tone that he used made Yamaguchi laugh, his hand quick to cover his mouth to try and smother the noise. Another roll of his companion’s eyes showed he didn’t find the statement as humorous but gave the florist time to reign himself in. As he finally quieted down, brown eyes flickered to his left when hearing a familiar tune floating through the air. Bright lights and memories washing over him, Yamaguchi paused in his walking to stare across the street. Though the commotion was toward the middle of the park, the wedding employee was able to recognize the festival taking up most of the grass beyond the gate.

“Tsukki, look!” Excitement tinged his voice as he pointed out the rowdy scene, waiting until Tsukishima turned to continue. “I completely forgot about the town’s festival.”

“What festival?”

“You know, the anniversary festival?” It was obvious that the lawyer wasn’t following, making Yamaguchi blink in genuine surprise. “Every year on the last day of May there’s a celebration for the day the town was founded. They do some sort of parade in the afternoon, and then they have a huge festival in the park. My parents used to bring me to this every year; I haven’t been able to go lately because of how busy the end of May gets.”

“Sounds unnecessary.” Yet there was a tone of the lawyer’s voice that proved he didn’t commit to the opinion he presented. Yamaguchi took a moment to read Tsukishima’s face, his heart giving a hard tug when seeing the line of indifference crossing his lips. But the eyes that tried to look annoyed at the suggestion took the edge of sadness. The small glimpses of the blond’s past revealed to the florist weren’t filled with family unity or love. It shouldn’t have surprised him to hear that Tsukishima had never been to a festival like this. Had his parents ever taken him on vacation? Had they thrown him a birthday party? Did the solemn man even know what it meant to have quality family time?

“Could we go?” The quiet question came out with little force, Yamaguchi rushing to explain himself at the confused look from Tsukishima. “It’s just—I really like the festival! But I know you’re a busy person and probably have plans after—”

“It’s fine.” The lack of complaint in the taller man’s voice was surprising, though Tsukishima’s shrug proved he didn’t notice. “I chose the restaurant, so it’s only fair you choose the after-dinner
activity.”

“Ah, right. Well then, let’s get going!” Impulsively the brunet snagged his companion’s hand, refusing to look back at his expression when dragging him across the street. Entering the park was like stepping into another world, Yamaguchi’s mental panic attack dissolving instantly. The familiar sounds and smells of his childhood rushed through him, and he felt his shoulders relax at the comfort the scene brought. It looked similar to when he was a child; little booths lined the paths of the park, filled with delicious treats and quirky games. In the larger spaces of grass sat rides that flashed with colors and wacky songs. The area was crowded with all types of people, though each wore a similar face of excitement. Children laughed as they scooted past Yamaguchi’s side, the freckled man feeling his own grin grow while watching the group rush to a cotton candy vendor. He couldn’t blame them; after all, that had been him at one time.

It took some time getting Tsukishima acclimated to the new experience. They visited the rides first, the florist blushing when his tickets were paid for by the blond. Determined to make the trip worth it, Yamaguchi dragged his stiff companion on every ride possible. He laughed at the slight widening of Tsukishima’s eyes when the compartment of the zipper flipped itself during the ride, enjoying the lack of control the man had over his emotions. The scrambler’s rotating motion had pressed Yamaguchi into Tsukishima’s side, making him flush red and try to ignore the flip of his stomach when seeing a teasing smirk reflected back at him. The Ferris wheel helped settle his stomach from the spinning cups, the two trying a few other rides with mild interest.

It wasn’t long before Yamaguchi pulled the eye-rolling lawyer to the game booths. He enjoyed ski-ball, though Tsukishima seemed more interested in the darts game. Being good at the ring toss as a child didn’t transition to Yamauchi’s adult skill, though the blond seemed to be a natural. It only took one attempt for Tsukishima to win a prize that easily got deposited into the confused florist’s arms. He didn’t get much of an answer, but Yamaguchi couldn’t stop himself from burying his smile into the head of the fuzzy teddy bear.

Even as darkness fully encased the spring night, Yamaguchi felt warm walking through the park with Tsukishima. They weren’t speaking now, simply enjoying the atmosphere. Or he hoped they were. Silently, Yamaguchi wondered if Tsukishima was simply going through the motions because of his guilt of their fight. A peek from the side of his eye showed that the lawyer’s eyes were assessing the area around them, making sure to read each sign over the booths they were passing. He didn’t look bothered, but Tsukishima’s job relied on him being able to hide his feelings. Yamaguchi wanted to believe that this wasn’t the case; if Tsukishima had wanted to end the night, he would have refused to come to the festival with him. From the times they had shared conversations, he knew the blond was stubborn on his best days. If he didn’t want to do something, it took blackmail or copious amount of respect to make him comply. Since Yamaguchi had neither, he had to assume that Tsukishima wanted to be there with him.

Get out of your own head already! Yamaguchi’s demanding thought made the florist shake his head, looking around them to try and find something to strike up a conversation. Brown eyes fell on a beautiful sign, his stare wide with awe as his feet dragged to a full stop.
“Is something wrong?” Taking a moment to look back at Tsukishima, Yamaguchi lifted his hand to point up at the booth in front of them. The blond took his time to follow the hand, Tsukishima’s eyes squinting in concentration. “A henna stand?”

“I’ve always wanted to do this, but this is the first time I’ve seen one here at the festival. I know it’s an inconvenience, but could I get one?”

“It’s your body,” was the man’s instant reply, seeming to ignore the implication of taking up more of his time. Thankful to realize that Tsukishima wasn’t rushing to end their time together, Yamaguchi gave a grateful smile before walking to the booth entrance. Unlike some of the other stands, this one was covered with a purple sheer fabric, the larger space feeling more like a carnival tent. The inside was filled with beautiful drawings of henna designs, Yamaguchi’s nose catching the scent of incenses and ink. His spine straightened when an older woman’s eyes moved toward them, though her calm smile chased away some of his anxiety.

“Good evening.”

“Ah, hello!” His rushed greeting made her laugh and his cheeks flush, mentally berating himself for the reply. He could hear the small snort from Tsukishima behind him, which only increased his embarrassment. Trying to push through it, Yamaguchi coughed and spoke. “I was just wondering about your henna tattoos.”

“Of course, please sit down.” The woman led the florist to a table in the middle of the booth, pointing to one of the two stools. Giving one glance back to the silent lawyer, Yamaguchi hesitantly sat on the seat, his henna artist making her way to the other stool slowly. “Have you thought of where you’d like to put it?”

“Can I do my forearm?” Though he knew Suga wouldn’t mind the henna tattoo during the work day, he felt it was still something that he’d have to cover during wedding ceremonies. The long sleeves of his wedding attire would hide the henna until it faded, but he’d be able to show it off on his free time. The woman gave a slow nod before she flipped his wrist to rest the back of his arm on the table, slipping on a pair of gloves. She let her relaxed gaze move to her side, and it was then that Yamaguchi noticed the bottles of paste sitting on a small shelf. Her hum was small as he picked out a bottle, shaking it twice as she looked back to him.

“Have you thought of what to get?” The question was logical and instantly made Yamaguchi feel unprepared as he gave a shake of his head. She didn’t seem surprised, easily uncapping her bottle with her thumb. “No need to worry, child. I knew the design to choose the moment I saw you two enter.”
“Really?” She nodded before she pressed the tip of the tube to his wrist, the sudden sensation sending a shiver through his arm. He tried not to make noise, but when the second line of paste rolled on the sensitive skin, Yamaguchi couldn’t stop the gasp and flex of his muscles. The tickling sensation was nothing new to the florist; he had been a victim of sensitive skin since he was a child. The woman didn’t seem to mind his reflexes, though she paused in her design before she turned her attention to Tsukishima.

“The paste won’t dry properly if he’s moving. Hold his other hand to help him relax, okay?” She spoke gently to the blond, but the words made a chill instantly creep into Yamaguchi’s spine. She wanted Tsukishima to hold his hand?! Why would she think that would help him? He tried to deny the suggestion, but his words tripped over themselves and his tongue couldn’t form a sentence. Neither seemed to notice, the lawyer staring silently at the woman for a few long seconds before he sighed.

“Fine.”

“Huh?” But Yamaguchi’s question wasn’t answered with words. Instead, the hand that had previously hung from the edge of the table was grabbed by Tsukishima. The florist was sure that he was dreaming now. He couldn’t remember a time that his companion had initiated any contact between them. If anything, he was sure that Tsukishima felt annoyed whenever Yamaguchi stepped three feet into his personal bubble. He tried to respect it as much as he could, understanding that not everyone enjoyed physical intimacy. But now, as brown eyes stared at the fingers linked between his, he couldn’t help but feel warmth curling his toes inside of his shoes. Something so small shouldn’t have relaxed his entire body, but knowing that Tsukishima wasn’t repulsed by touching Yamaguchi was a huge relief.

“Much better.” And weirdly, the holding on his hand chased away the previous tickling sensation. Instead, he felt sedated, his eyes lowering to watch the woman work on the design now being sketched onto his forearm. The sharp lines were precise and practiced, Yamaguchi noticing the familiar pattern as the woman spoke. “Once I finish the design, you’ll have to let the paste set. It needs one hour to rest, though the ideal time would be twenty-four hours. When removing the paste, use a brush or your thumb. The design should stay on between two and four weeks if you take care of it.”

“I’ll do my best,” He answered quickly, wondering if he gave off the impression of being too flighty to follow the careful instructions. Self-conscious, he lowered his gaze, unsure if the information was accurate. There were times he felt he would lose his head if it wasn’t attached to his shoulders. It would make sense that people would assume he was a space cadet. Before he could let his mind sink deeper, a small squeeze of his hand yanked him from his thoughts. Yamaguchi looked back to Tsukishima, whose gaze showed his irritation.
“Don’t tense up.”

“Sorry, Tsukki.”

“And stop worrying; you’re capable of growing dozens of plants and knowing hundreds of meanings behind flower schematics. You are no idiot.” Then Tsukishima looked to the side, his attention focusing on one of the henna designs on the wall. “Trust in yourself a little.”

“Right.” The words didn’t feel like a criticism, but a compliment that Yamaguchi wasn’t expecting. It made his smile hard to hide as he looked back to his arm, amazed at the intricate design drawn over his skin. As the minutes burned away in silence, Yamaguchi could make out what the woman was drawing. The stars that peppered his freckled skin were paired with delicate swirls and curved dots. It was beautiful, and Yamaguchi felt right with the henna design decorating his forearm. A final swoop of the bottle darted along his wrist before she pulled away, capping the tip to show she was finished. “This is...beautiful.”

“Thank you, but the set isn’t complete.” Her words weren’t what the florist expected to hear, though the artist’s attention had drifted away from him. Tsukishima became her focal point, her finger lifting to make a slow circle. “You’ll have to switch spots for me to finish the henna.”

“You want Tsukki to get one, too?” Yamaguchi couldn’t hide his surprise as he glanced over at the man who hadn’t moved from his spot beside Yamaguchi. The woman didn’t seem bothered by the skepticism, her attention now turning back to the bottles of paste next to her.

“It’ll compliment your design. I’ll have to use a lighter color for his skin, of course.” The argument was on the florist’s lips, but it was halted when something gentle pulled on his hand. His feet carried his weight when he moved to stand, his hand losing Tsukki’s as the lawyer silently moved onto the stool. There was no argument or displeasure on the blonde’s face as he casually placed his forearm onto the table. He looked intrigued instead, keeping golden eyes on the delicate way the woman started to draw on his skin. Yamaguchi wanted to ask why Tsukishima hadn’t denied the offered tattoo. Tsukishima was quiet as he watched the woman work, his relaxed shoulders and impassive face showing no resistance to the treatment. Since entering the booth, there was a shift in the man’s demeanor. It felt respectful and humble, something that Yamaguchi would have never expected from Tsukishima. What was it about this woman that made the lawyer react in such a way?

“Do you know the beauty of a henna tattoo?” She paused to wait for a response, though Yamaguchi couldn’t think of an appropriate answer to her question. She didn’t seem to mind, tapping the tip to Tsukishima’s arm and drawing another slow curve as she spoke. “Each drawing is filled with symbolism and cultural importance. In my homeland, henna is used for celebrations and festivities. It celebrates the important things in life. And even though they fade with time, the
“I didn’t know any of that,” Yamaguchi admitted, the woman producing a smile as she finished the intricate design on Tsukishima’s arm. Once placing her bottle down, she beckoned the brunet to the table, waiting for the florist to step closer in order to grab his hand. With little warning, his arm was lined up with his companion’s, and it was then that Yamaguchi noticed something important. The sliver of moon that was marking the blonde’s arm was littered with swooping swirls that mirrored the design in Yamaguchi’s henna. And now, with the two arms laid next to each other, it was obvious that the designs were a pair. The stars lined up with the man’s moon, and for a second Yamaguchi felt his cheeks rise in color at the silent implication. “They’re…”

“When I saw you two entering my booth, I knew what your souls wanted to say.” Brown eyes hesitantly lifted to look at the woman, who looked ethereal despite her aged eyes and soft smile. “The stars and moons are symbols of deep and lasting love between partners.”

“Lo-Lov-” Yamaguchi couldn’t even get the words out! His whole body flushed with red as he tried to digest what was just implied. Did this woman think that they were romantically involved? Had Yamaguchi done something to imply that they were together? He tried to think about their small bits of conversation, but nothing jumped out at him. The florist gave a side glance to the blonde sitting next to him, praying that he wouldn’t see a glare of a look of disgust.

“Thank you for your hard work.” So when the lawyer bowed his head to the woman before standing, it took Yamaguchi a second to react. Wide eyes quickly shifted between the two, the brunet trying to fumble through his words in order to catch up with the conversation. Casually the taller man glanced back to Yamaguchi, his eyebrow raised. “Are you coming?”

“We...we have to pa-pay still!”

“Then I’ll be waiting outside.” Tsukishima didn’t wait for an answer as he left the booth, leaving a stammering mess of freckles with the laughing older woman. Embarrassed for being embarrassed, Yamaguchi turned back to the woman while shoving his hand into his back pocket.

“How much do we owe you?”

“You’ve done enough, child.” The woman’s happiness was pure as she moved around the table, slowly taking Yamaguchi’s hand between her smaller ones and peering up at him with a smile. “Sometimes the greatest payment you can get is seeing two people happy with one another.”
“I...I don’t mean to be rude,” Yamaguchi started, swallowing once and casting guilty eyes to the side. He didn’t want to watch his words destroy the optimism shining in her features. “But Tsukki and I are...we’re not li-like that.”

“Not yet.” A comforting squeeze from her hands brought his attention back, the woman removing her top hand to tap the side of her temple. “But these eyes have seen many more years than you. I’ve learned to see the strings of destiny between two people. Your future looks quite bright, and I have a feeling that man has a big influence on that.”

“You...really think so?” He didn’t want to admit that the waver in his voice was from hope, his cheeks warming as she walked him toward the exit of the booth.

“Remember this; fate does not put people in our lives by accident. He’s here for a reason.” Her hand brushed the fabric covering the door open, letting Yamaguchi walk through it before she gave a kind way. “Be sure to take good care of your tattoos, boys.”

“We will, thank you.” Tsukishima’s voice was strong as the two men bowed and walked away from the booth. Yamaguchi’s eyes strayed to his wrist on the walk out of the park, retracing the lines of the henna tattoo. Silence crept between the two once escaping the festivities, the darkness of night cloaking them from others. Though the florist wanted to wait for Tsukishima to introduce a topic to talk about, his lips couldn’t stay quiet for long, brown eyes flickering back to his walking companion.

“I’m sorry you had to get a tattoo.”

“I must have missed the part where a gun was held to my head.” The words were sarcastic in nature, yet lacked the venom to be cruel. If this was anyone but Tsukishima, the florist would have thought it almost held a hint of humor.

“You wanted one?”

“Not exactly. If that had been a cheap carnival worker, I wouldn’t have given it a second look. Those who try to imitate the culture of India or Morocco are doing a disservice to the spirituality of the application.” Tsukishima’s explanation was quiet, but Yamaguchi could tell that the content was important to the lawyer. “I work with a woman who was raised in India; I’ve learned a lot from her family about their views on tradition and religion. The woman seemed trained in her culture and skill, and I respect those who are genuine in their endeavors.”
“That’s amazing,” Yamaguchi replied, taking another glance to the artwork on his skin. “Though it makes sense; you’re so talented in your field that you’d probably only want to spend time with the best of the best.”

“Basically.” And yet here he was, walking down the street with Yamaguchi while wearing matching tattoos. A flutter of childish joy sprinkled itself into the florist’s heart. Sure, the paste wasn’t permanent and both could easily hide their mark with a long-sleeved shirt. But hadn’t the woman said the meaning meant more than the actual design? Sharing this night with Tsukishima felt...right.

Even if the lawyer was only entertaining him to apologize for the previous fight, Yamaguchi was happy. For this one moment, he felt special to have something he could claim was only shared with the blond. Maybe this was the destiny the woman was speaking about. Maybe there was more. The thought made his cheeks warm and his stomach cramp up with desire he knew he could never verbalize. His smile was hard to hide as he pressed his unmarked hand to his shirt, curling the fingers over the steady thump of his heart. Sharing a destiny, no matter how long, with Tsukishima didn’t sound so horrible, after all.

Lost in his thoughts, the naive florist missed the casual glance cast on him, and the hint of stoic lips lifting into a smile.

~**~

“Can you believe they’ve got seventy different flavors?” Kenma’s eyes lifted from his small cup of ice cream when Hinata plopped into the chair across from him, the teacher’s grin wide in triumph. “I’ve only tried 45 of them, but I plan to taste them all before the end of the year.”

“That’s too much,” Kenma answered quietly, taking a small glance around the outside patio they were sitting in. Despite it being a sunny June afternoon, the area was quiet. Grateful for the lack of crowds, Kenma returned his attention to the treat in front of him, taking a small bite of the fruity ice cream. It was sweet on his tongue, the hint of cinnamon weaved into the cold dessert well enough to resemble the apple pie Kenma preferred to eat. Hinata’s lips were stained from his “blue moon” choice, Shouyou humming in pleasure once taking a large scoop into his mouth.

“You don’t have any shoots today?” At his friend’s question, the editor shook his head, brushing his hair behind his ear as he spoke.

“We finished them earlier this morning.”
“And Kuroo doesn’t mind you coming out with me?” The tilt of Hinata’s orange hair showed he was curious about the answer, though Kenma couldn’t understand the question.

“What do you mean?”

“Well, I am a guy. And after he said all of that stuff to you about the photo album…” Shouyou trailed off, though he was quick to start up again when realizing Kenma was still unsure of what he was implying. “Well, aren’t you guys dating now?”

“Dating?” The word felt strange in Kenma’s mouth, the editor taking another spoonful of ice cream to try and ignore his congested chest. “I’m not sure, really.”

“He didn’t ask you out?” Kenma gave a slow shake of his head, watching the teacher tap his utensil against his lower lip and furrow his eyebrows in thought. “Maybe he’s waiting for you to ask him out instead. He did make the first move, after all.”

“I don’t know.” The statement was being used more often than Kenma liked to admit. Emotions were just more difficult for him to process than most people. He swirled his spoon in his dessert as he tried to make logical sense of the current situation. “Kuroo hasn’t treated me any different since our kiss.”

“I can’t figure out if that’s because you two were already all ‘bwah’ or because you’re still unsure how you feel!” Hinata’s forehead smacked into the wooden table with a groan, Kenma watching quietly. He was sure the action wouldn’t do too much damage to his friend’s brain, as he had seen Shouyou smack into something every time they had hung out. The teacher didn’t lift his forehead from the resting spot, but the editor caught the lower voice his friend was using. “What does it feel like?”

“It?”

“Getting kissed by a...guy,” Hinata mumbled, his little hands clenching the edge of the picnic table while he spoke.

Kenma couldn’t see his friend’s face, but he knew from the hesitant tone that Shouyou wasn’t asking for mere curiosity. Though he hadn’t spoken to many about the kiss, the blonde had confided in his short friend the morning after it happened. He wasn’t sure why he had gone to
Shouyou; he had known others for far longer. But it felt right telling his secret to the fully supportive teacher. Hinata had reacted positively, and the simple acceptance from his friend had helped wash some heavy anxiety out of his system. Through the past month, Hinata had shared some secrets of his own. And he knew that the question just asked was a loaded one that Kenma had to answer carefully.

“I’ve never been romantically involved with a male or female before Kuroo.” His anxiety had made sure to keep his dating life non-existent. That was, in his opinion, one of the benefits of discovering Kuroo’s photo album. Looking into the semi-soupy ice cream, Kenma linked his hands around the cup and continued. “Having him as a potential love interest doesn’t worry me. He’s my best friend, so even if I mess up somehow, he’ll still be there.”

“I kind of feel jealous.” Hinata’s words were followed by the teacher lifting his head, a pout on his lips as he leaned his chin in his hand. “I tried to date my best friend, which was fun at first, but we weren’t really compatible. We’re much better as friends, I think.”

“Kuroo could feel the same given some time to really think about it.” Which worried the editor more than he wanted to admit. While he was still trying to work through his emotions, the possibility of the photographer changing his mind swept through his anxious thoughts. What if Kuroo’s interest waned over time? What if they were not sexually compatible? Kenma wasn’t stupid; he knew his friend had been in sexual relationships in high school. He had experience and natural skill, while Kenma struggled to understand how to properly kiss his childhood friend back. Wouldn’t Kuroo get tired of having to teach Kenma about normal sexual experiences?

“Kuroo? No way!” Hinata’s burst of denial made Kenma blink, hesitating to turn his attention back to the innocent shake of orange hair. “If you’re his inspiration for photography, it’s got to be because he really loves you. Plus, why wouldn’t he want to be with you? You’re super cool!”

“I’m...not really,” Kenma admitted, stunned to see a look of confusion spreading over Hinata’s face.

“Really? But I find you cool.” The genuine look in the amber eyes of his companion proved that the teacher believed in his words. He didn’t seem to notice the widening of Kenma’s stare as he scooped up another bite of ice cream, his attention distracted as he spoke. “It’s like...you’re quiet and different, but that’s what makes you so awesome. You know a ton of stuff about video games, and you’re funny. Even when I can’t figure out a level or cause our team to lose, you never get mad at me. Hanging out with you is fun and easy; I like being your friend!”

Hinata’s kind words felt overwhelming to Kenma, the blond ducking his head down to hide his reddened cheeks. Working with the members of “Little Crows” meant that Kenma was showered with compliments. Suga made sure to let his gratitude known, while Kuroo and Oikawa continued
to gush about his physical “beauty”. Kageyama struggled to show any sort of affections to others, but he took time out of his busy day to make fresh apple pie every Monday night for Kenma to snack on throughout the week. Yamaguchi loved to show his garden to Kenma, sending bouquets home with Kuroo on days that Kenma seemed under the weather. Their appreciation was always warm and unrequested, reminding Kenma that he had people that loved him for who he was.

But Shouyou wasn’t his work family. He had no reason to compliment Kenma’s eccentric personality, and he gained nothing from sharing his kind opinion of the editor. But the energetic teacher enjoyed being friends with the introvert. While Kenma saw his quiet and distant persona as something people would detest, Hinata found it different and amazing. The reason Kenma had started to play video games was because of the lack of human contact he needed to do it. People in school or on the bus wouldn’t bother him when he had his console out and headphones in. It was his means of keeping people away. But Shouyou, in his friendly and cheerful persona, found this part of Kenma entertaining. He wanted to be friends with Kenma.

Hinata accepted him.

“Thank you,” Kenma mumbled quietly, his smile faint as his friend nodded before sucking down the dripping blue mess on his spoon. If Hinata wanted to respond, his full mouth and phone’s notification shut the conversation down. A vibration in his own pocket had the editor pulling out the phone, peering down to see that Oikawa had group messaged him. A quick glance at the list of members in the message showed that Hinata, as well as a group of numbers he didn't recognize, were included, and the editor could only assume it was other members of the wedding party.

“Someone from “Little Crows” sent us a message?” Hinata didn’t sound sure in his guess, the editor unlocking his phone to read the message.

“It’s Oikawa,” Kenma explained, letting his eyes scan over the text.

Oikawa: Code Razzmatazz has been activated! All members of Little Crows and the wedding of Asahi/Noya must attend an emergency meeting Wednesday at 5 pm. See you then ;P

“A meeting? Did you know about this?” Hinata asked, Kenma giving a quiet shake of his head as he sighed.

“Not exactly.” He did know that the tailor was planning something when he had asked Kenma to sync up the wedding party’s calendars with their own in order to find a day that was open. Being the best with computers, it took little time for the blond to check the Gmail calendars of each of the members to locate an opening in their schedules. The wedding party was a little harder, but nothing
an email to Daichi couldn’t fix. The twinkle in Oikawa’s eyes after giving the exact date now broadcasted in the text should have set off warning bells to Kenma, but the editor had been too distracted about Kuroo’s confession to really investigate.

“You think it’s something important?”

“Knowing Oikawa, no.” Kenma’s answer paused the energetic teacher, Hinata taking a moment to push his now empty ice cream cup to the side before leaning both elbows onto the picnic table.

“Hey, Kenma? Can I ask you something?” The silent stare from the blond was meant to give his friend the green light, but it was obvious that Shouyou was still hesitant to vocalize his question. “Do...you know if there’s anything going on with Oikawa and Kageyama?”

“Oikawa tends to pick on Kageyama more than the rest of us,” Kenma answeredtruthfully, watching Hinata’s face as he spoke. “Yamaguchi and Kageyama tend to be the victims of Oikawa’s teasing most days. I think it’s because they react the most. Neither is his type, though. Kageyama’s never shown interest in dating someone, so I don’t know what his type is.”

“Never?” The perk in Hinata’s head at the information was obvious, though the editor was sure that his friend wasn’t aware he had done it.

“You’re the first person I’ve seen Kageyama hang out with outside of our team. Kageyama doesn’t make friends easily.”

“That’s so dumb!” Hinata’s outburst made Kenma flinch back, though he associated the reaction to the teacher’s loud voice. Embarrassment blotted the orange haired man’s cheeks as he glared down at the wood, little fists now bunched up under his chin. “Why wouldn’t people want to hang out with him? It’s not like he’s a bad guy or anything.”

"Shouyou."

“Huh?” Rounded eyes glanced up to Kenma at the call of his name, the editor taking a moment to study his friend’s face. Though he was never one to stick his nose into other’s situations, he didn’t feel so intrusive when it came to Hinata. Hanging out with the teacher had given Kenma time to observe his friend’s behavior involving the quiet cake decorator. Their tumultuous partnership had shifted through the past few months, and Kenma could clearly see the unspoken feelings starting to stir between the two. On occasion, Kenma would field questions from Kageyama involving Hinata.
They were never intrusive, and Kageyama would find superficial excuses for needing the information. Hinata was similar in his curiosity about Kenma’s co-worker, though he didn’t hide behind fake reasons. He simply wanted to know more about Kageyama. And whenever Hinata learned something new about Kageyama, a softer smile would sneak its way onto the teacher’s lips before his attention was drawn back to the game they were playing.

But Kenma also knew about Hinata’s recent discovery of his sexuality, and how unsure he was with it. He was just starting to explore his options outside of women, and the subject was sensitive and raw. Though the occasional hint of his romantic curiosity toward the taller baker was just lingering on Hinata’s lips, he always changed the topic at the last second. Being observant meant that Kenma was aware of how conflicted his friend currently was. The last thing that Kenma wanted to do was speak about feelings that Hinata hadn’t fully accepted yet.

Instead, the editor turned his attention to the melted ice cream in front of him, gently pushing the creamy creation into Hinata’s vicinity.

“Would you like the rest of this?”

“Oh, really?! I haven’t had this flavor yet!” Happiness brimmed the excited gaze Hinata sent the treat before he started to devour it. Kenma didn’t comment on the mess that his friend was making, pulling out his DS and turning the console on.

Hinata had accepted Kenma for who he was; when the time came, Kenma would make sure to repay the favor tenfold.

~*~

“Okay, Tooru. We’re all here, as you asked. So will you please tell us what the ‘emergency’ is now?” Suga was trying to keep his smile and motherly voice up in order to cover the silent need to toss his grinning assistant out the nearest window.

When he had received the mysterious text message Monday, he had tracked down his employee for immediate answers. Tooru had been evasive at best, hiding behind his claim that the meeting had come at the request of Noya during one of their fittings. Not willing to interrogate his customer over his troublesome tailor, Suga had no choice but to put his trust into Oikawa’s hands. It was a struggle, and for two days the wedding planner had to pretend the secret meeting wasn’t burning a hole in the back of his mind. Even as he spoke with future customers and worked with Yamaguchi on a set of bouquets, questions popped up. The fact that he had no way to get answers was frustrating, though he tried his best to keep it hidden whenever he was around his smug employee.
“It’s so nice to see that you’re all here on time!” Oikawa’s cheerful voice didn’t settle the tension in the room, though the tailor didn’t seem to mind. His eyes moved onto the short brunet standing next to him, the tailor patting the top of Noya’s head twice before stepping forward. “We were worried that some of you would drag your feet or try to skip out, but it looks like you and Asahi have picked a wonderful wedding party.”

“Yup, they’re the best.” The pride in Noya’s voice was obvious, the grinning mechanic sending a confident nod toward his nervous fiancee sitting on the much too small folding chair. The group was currently sitting outside of the venue, the summer air and longer stretches of daylight making the evening meeting possible. The horseshoe formation made it possible for Oikawa and Noya to speak to them all at once. Suga gave a quiet sigh as he slumped back in his chair, his side brushing the chuckling best man beside him. Despite the frustration, he felt in his shoulders, the warm palm resting against his own in Daichi’s lap helped him relax.

“Get to the point, Noya.” Daichi’s firm tone wasn’t demanding, but structured, and Suga felt his lips twitch when realizing it gave off a fatherly aura. They were really two peas in a pod, a realization that made Suga squeeze Daichi’s hand before reinforcing his idea.

“I think it’d be best to get this meeting going; your wedding party has been quite accommodating.”

“Well they should be; this wedding is supposed to be all about the two grooms.” Oikawa sent a smile toward the blushing Asahi before he turned his attention back to the group, his voice giddy with excitement. “But we can start now, I suppose.”

“Thank God,” Tsukishima muttered, Yamaguchi shushing him through a muffled laugh which only increased at the roll of the lawyer's eyes beside him.

“On Monday, while discussing the vest’s color scheme, Noya and I came across something very important. There, right under our noses, was a Code Razzmatazz.”

“I hate when that happens.” Despite admitting never reading the manual, Kuroo gave a teasing snap of his fingers before nudging Kenma’s side with a grin. Kenma didn’t look up from his game, and Oikawa stuck his tongue out at the pleased photographer.

“Am I supposed to know what any of this means?” Tanaka’s question represented the rest of the wedding party’s confusion, the brunet tailor giving a bright smile in reply.
“Let me put in terms you’ll understand; Iwa-chan and chibi-kun have been hiding a secret from all of us.”

“What the hell are you talking about?” Iwaizumi’s bite of a reply didn’t match the fully flushed face of Hinata, the teacher glancing toward a confused Kageyama before quickly waving his hands in front of himself.

“I-I’m not hiding anything!”

“You forgot to include Suga-san.” Noya’s helpful interjection took the wedding planner by surprise. Feeling a few sets of eyes on him, Suga tried to think about the claim that was made. From the reactions from the other two accused parties, Suga was sure that they were just as caught off guard as him. What could the three men all be hiding without realizing it? Searching his brain came up with no obvious answer, and he doubted he would from the victorious gleam in Oikawa’s eyes.

“Well I already knew about his; what kind of an assistant would I be if I didn’t?”

“A dead one if you don’t start talking.” Iwaizumi’s threat made Oikawa’s spine visibly tense, Suga feeling bad for enjoying the reaction a little more than he should. Noya seemed to take pity on the frantic Hinata, who looked ready to burst in his seat from how red his face had gotten.

“Shouyou, what’s coming up exactly two weeks from today?” Noya’s hint turned all the attention to the teacher, though he was too distracted with trying to answer to notice the sudden audience.

“Two Wednesdays from now...June 21st? Oh. Oh! That’s my birthday!”

“So that’s what it is.” Suga’s words caught the attention of the group, Suga giving a laugh at the realization. “Iwaizumi-san, when is your birthday?”

“June 10th,” the officer answered immediately, Suga confirming the one thread that connected the three men.

“Mine falls on June 13th; right between you and Shouyou’s. We all have birthdays this month,
though I’m not quite sure why this is cause for a meeting.”

“I always knew my Suga-kun was the smartest.” Oikawa’s coo of praise made Suga arch an eyebrow, waiting for the man to answer his question. “When we realized this, we just knew that we had to do something to celebrate. And Noya, bless his beautifully gay soul, has decided to share his spotlight with his groomsmen and our cute wedding planner.”

“What does that mean, exactly?” The caution from Ennoshita was well deserved, catching on to Oikawa’s sneaky ways earlier than most.

“Who cares?” The sour tone in Tsukishima voice proved that his patience with the cat-and-mouse game was gone, sending a glare toward the photographer now shoving a finger into his cheek.

“Don’t be so grumpy, Tsukki.” The lawyer was quick to smack the hand away from his face, leaning closer to the florist and scowling.

“Excuse me.” Lacking the attention of the group, Oikawa cleared his throat before holding his arms out in front of him.“As we were saying...Instead of a traditional bachelor’s party, Noya would like to have a birthday party for the three of you.”

“A birthday party?!” Hinata rebounded from his embarrassment quickly, knocking his chair over as he shot out of it to jump in front of Noya. The two were unable to stay on the ground from their excitement, Hinata bouncing on his feet and shouting. “That sounds awesome!”

“I knew you’d be on board, my special kouhai.” Noya lifted both of his hands to Hinata’s head, ruffling the messy hair while the two laughed. Suga watched the two bounce their excitement off each other with a smile, though his attention was tugged away at the grumble of a less enthused officer.

“This sounds like a lot of work.”

“Don’t be such a wet blanket, Iwa-chan.” Tooru was in front of the man in a flash, slender fingers curling over the back of the chair while he leaned closer to the scowling man now sitting between Oikawa’s arms. “What, are you nervous that I’ll figure out you’re really turning 40? Don’t worry, I like cougars too.”
“You’re the same age as me, you jackass.”

“If you keep scowling like that, people will mistake your for my grandpa.” The teasing remark from Oikawa resulted in Iwaizumi shoving his fingers into the other’s forehead, Tooru yelping as he stumbled back in pain. Suga could only sigh at the action, knowing that his employee deserved it.

“Count me out of your stupid plans, Asskawa.” But before the officer could leave the scene, Noya appeared in his path.

“You really don’t want to spend your birthday with us?” It was in this moment that Suga realized why Noya and Tooru got along well. Despite his innocent and carefree demeanor, the mechanic seemed to know the best tactics to get his way. The point was proven when he tugged Hinata into his side, forcing Iwaizumi to peer down at the disheartened look on the younger man’s face. “Wouldn’t it be fun to celebrate it with Hinata? He’s really looking forward to it.”

“It’s not that,” Iwaizumi protested, his usual frown losing some of its bite when Hinata’s mood perked up in hope.

“So you’ll come? I’ve never had a big party before.”

“And this is where he caves.” Daichi’s quiet commentary brushed next to Suga’s ear, the wedding planner glancing to him from the corner of his eye. “Iwaizumi’s tough as nails when it comes to work, and he has no problem laying down the law with Tanaka or Tsukishima. But he’s always had a soft spot for Shouyou. I think it’s because Hinata’s dad died when he was little, so Shouyou tries his best to help support his mom and little sister. Hajime sees a similarity in their upbringings. Iwaizumi’s been known to drop by Hinata’s apartment to make sure he’s got more than ramen and ice cream for food. Noya and Tanaka like to call him ‘uncle’ when he’s not around, though I’m pretty sure Hajime would kill them if he found out.”

“You really think he’s going to cave?” But Daichi’s affirmation wasn’t needed. Suga watched a flash of confliction in Iwaizumi’s face before he groaned, shoulders slumping in defeat.

“The first sign of a stripper or anything else weird and I’m leaving.”

“Yes!” The synchronized answer from the two short men and congratulatory high-five proved there was power in numbers no matter the size of the army.
“All that leaves is our faithful leader.” Oikawa’s comment left the final decision in Suga’s hands, though the wedding planner didn’t need much convincing. Holding his free hand up to show his surrender, Suga gave a smile before speaking.

“My job is to do whatever I can to make the groom happy; you won’t hear a complaint from me.”

“Then it’s decided. Code Razzmatazz is officially in effect!” Clapping his hands together with a grin, the tailor set his sights on the editor currently staring at the screen in his hands. “Kenma?”

“June 15th.” The date held no meaning to Suga, though the blond didn’t wait long to explain. “According to the information you gathered, nobody in the wedding party works past 6 pm, and we don’t have an early wedding the following Friday.”

“That date sounds familiar.” Tsukishima’s narrowing gaze shifted to Yamaguchi, the florist’s nervous laugh proving he knew far more than Suga or the others. “That was one of the dates you asked about on the phone the other day.”

“That’s cause he knew about the party,” Oikawa said casually, brushing some dirt off the edge of his shirt with little interest. “He was the only person to actually read the manual, after all; I had to recruit the buttercup in my plan.”

“Sorry, Tsukki.” The blond gave a scoff at the apology, though he didn’t move the arm that had found a home on the back of Yamaguchi’s chair. The florist looked relieved at the lack of distance between them, his smile rising in strength as he looked back to Oikawa.

“Well then, that settles that. Leave all of the planning to me. When I have the location of the party planned, I’ll let you know. And be ready to have a night you’ll never forget.” Surely satisfied with his sneaky handiwork, Oikawa wore a grin that oozed mischief. Tanaka, Noya and Hinata were quick to cheer at the thought, Oikawa laughing as the trio dubbed him the ‘Great Party King’. Iwaizumi looked at ‘excited’ as Tsukishima for the event, Kuroo teasing Yamaguchi about tricking the lawyer for the plan. Kenma continued to play his game through the commotion as if the scene wasn’t out of the ordinary. Ennoshita seemed only concerned in getting Tanaka’s shirt back on, while Kageyama watched Hinata with a wary expression.

“This should be an interesting night,” Daichi said, giving a warm smile that Suga struggled to give back.
Suga could only pray that the night wouldn’t end in *total* disaster.

Chapter End Notes

And now we get into the good stuff! Lots went on in this chapter, and only more fun is yet to come. So, will the henna artist be right about TsukkiYama? What will Kenma decide to do about Kuroo? Will this party be more than anyone bargained for? And who gets a little steamy in the next chapter? Kudos and comments to find out! Until next time!

Next Chapter- You Save Me
You Save Me

Chapter Summary

Suga and Daichi go on a second date, while Hinata discovers a secret about Kageyama.

Chapter Notes

Hello everyone! I hope your weekends are going well, and that you're excited about a new chapter. I've gotten a little behind on my writing (the last chapter of Soulmates is KILLING me, but I am happy to share this lovely chapter with you! Enjoy!

P.S- if you want to know the song for the KageHina part, it's Kenny Chesney's "You Save Me" Hence the name of the chapter =P

See the end of the chapter for more notes

When Daichi asked Suga on a second date, he didn’t hesitate to say yes. Between the stress of a busy schedule, Oikawa’s sneaky planning, and constant business, a Friday night endeavor was a blessing he didn’t know he was craving. It was easy to get through the second half of the week with the incentive of being with Daichi hanging just in front of him. He left Thursday night after handing a detailed list of objectives for Tooru to get done the next day. Daichi’s offer to take Suga hiking meant he had to take the day off, though the wedding planner couldn’t say he minded. He couldn’t remember the last Friday he had taken off without feeling guilty. But when Kuroo reminded him that he was indeed human, and not a machine, Suga was able to let the internal struggle go. Even someone who loved their job needed time to themselves.

“My legs are going to fall off.” Suga’s groan held little weight when he grinned up at the man beside him, hazel eyes watching Daichi laugh in reply.

“You can hold out a little longer; we’re almost back to the car.”

“Do you make Sugar hike this ridiculous mountain every week? The poor puppy.” The dog in question looked ecstatic to be walking down the dirt path of the hike, the fluffy tail swishing with each step she took. Suga’s wrist was wrapped in an orange leash, the wedding planner happy to lead their furry companion on their walk. Sugar looked fine with the choice, the canine seeming to enjoy the attention Suga tended to give him.
“Not every week, though I’m sure she’d prefer that. Most nights I can only take her for a jog around my apartment. If I’m stuck at work, Iwaizumi will take her out.”

“Iwaizumi-san doesn’t seem like an animal person,” Suga answered, though the bright grin Daichi gave him proved his assessment wasn’t true.

“He acts all gruff, but he’s a total softie. He loves Sugar just as much as I do.” As if understanding the conversation was about him, the white dog gave a few barks while glancing back to the two humans. Suga picked up his pace for a moment to pat the top of Sugar’s head, his sigh quiet when looking back to the clear sky above them.

“How did you find this place? I’ve lived around here for years and I’ve never heard of it.”

“Asahi gets stir crazy when he’s working on a new story, so his editor found this location to help him relax. It worked well for him, and he thought Sugar would enjoy it.”

“If I didn’t think I was about to melt into a sweat puddle, I’d probably enjoy it too.”

“You’re doing better than the first group I brought here.” Suga’s intrigue was apparent when he lifted his eyebrow, watching the brunet step over a fallen tree branch before he continued. “Asahi was too nervous to go on a first date alone with Noya, so he asked me to join them and Tanaka. I didn’t know much about the pair or their lack of impulse control at the time. They were super excited and raced the trail, and ended up wasting all of their energy. Once making it to the top, they were useless, so Asahi and I had to carry them back down. Noya was happy as a clam being carried on Asahi’s back, while Asahi looked ready to pass out from the proximity. I probably would have laughed at him if I didn’t have a drooling Tanaka snoring away on my shoulder.”

“I wouldn’t expect anything less from those two.” Suga didn’t hide his laughter as he hopped down the final obstacle of the path, waiting for Daichi to follow suit. The two men walked through the small parking, Sugar eagerly hopping into the back of Daichi’s car. Unable to resist the cute face of the dog, Suga reached through the window and scratched behind the fluffy ears with a smile. The canine looked pleased with the affection, his ears perking up to give Suga more access.

“Don’t spoil her too much.” Daichi’s remark made Suga scrunch his nose, giving a playful glare toward the owner.

“I can’t help it; we share a name.”
“That’s not an excuse.”

“Don’t listen to him; he’s just jealous you’re getting my attention,” Suga cooed to the dog, giving a final scratch before moving to the passenger seat.

“Someone’s been hanging out with Oikawa a little too much.” The start of the engine was paired with a scowl from Suga, who continued to play up his displeasure by tilting his nose up. The planner heard Daichi let out a small chuckle as he pulled out of the parking lot. “So what do you have planned for the weekend?”

“We’ve got wedding set up for tomorrow. I’m going back to the officer tonight to make sure that all the bride-mateys corsets are ready.” It was obvious that Daichi was confused by the statement, Suga laughing and leaning his arm on the console between them. “It’s a pirate themed wedding.”

“You get a lot of...interesting requests.”

“True, but it keeps my job fun and I love to please people. Which reminds me, how is our happy couple doing? I spoke with Noya at Oikawa’s little meeting, but I didn’t get much time to check in with him.”

“They’re more relaxed than I expected. Noya’s hard to shake up, but Asahi is normally a worry wart. To see him semi calm means you guys are working miracles.”

“That’s great to hear.”

“Now if you can keep Asahi calm after he gives Noya his surprise, I’ll be even more impressed.” Daichi’s statement caught Suga’s attention, the wedding planner tilting his head to show his confusion. The officer turned down another street before pulling up to a red light, taking the momentary break to look over to his passenger. “Asahi’s planning to surprise him with a trip to Australia for their honeymoon.”

“That’ll be so romantic!” Cooed Suga, though the sentiment wasn’t out of character for the writer. From the small conversations he had with the shy man, it was obvious that he fell more on the romantic side of the spectrum. Having a good amount of money from his writing business made it easy for him to afford such a trip, though Suga knew the vacation would still come as a surprise to Noya. As far as the mechanic knew, the two were simply going to a beach house on the coast for a
week. The smaller man never complained about the small honeymoon, but Suga was pretty confident that the upgrade would be appreciated.

“Yeah, if Asahi doesn’t pass out before telling him first.”

“Don’t be mean, you’re his best man.” But from how high the author jumped after Suga accidentally scared him during one of their walkthroughs, it was obvious the teasing statement held some truth. Sighing wistfully, Suga turned his attention back to the dog quietly lying along the back seat, stroking the sleeping canine’s head. “A trip sounds fantastic, though. I’d love to go to Europe someday.”

“They do European tours for honeymoons, too.” The words paused Suga’s petting of the dog, hazel eyes catching a brown glance in the rearview mirror. “I helped Asahi look at honeymoon packages. If you want a real hike, try climbing some of the hillsides in Europe.”

“Then my fiance would have to carry me down. Where am I going to find a guy who is both strong and selfless?” There was a hint of humor in the wedding planner’s voice, though he noticed the gaze that had been watching him was quick to drop back to the road in front of them.

“I’m sure it wouldn’t be hard for someone like you.” Daichi’s compliment made Suga blush, pulling his hand from Sugar to modestly push some of his hair out of his face. Unsure of whether he should agree or deny the claim, the light-haired man decided to switch the topic.

“Have you ever given any thought about your own wedding?”

“Huh?”

“You know, the reception, the music. Which colors you’d pick, or if you’d want to whisk your beautiful partner off to some exotic island for your honeymoon?” There was a moment of silence in the car that worried Suga, but his concern was quick to dissolve when Daichi gave a casual shrug.

“I don’t think I’d want something extravagant. My parents have been married thirty years and exchanged vows on my grandfather’s back porch. The ceremony was really small; they only invited their closest friends and family. Mom didn’t even buy a dress for it; she just wore her mother’s. I’d want a little more than that, probably, but I don’t need the works if I really love the person.”
“Sometimes the smallest ceremonies are the most romantic,” Suga admitted, feeling a tickle of contentment simmer in his chest. Though he ran a business that was known for pulling off all sorts of weddings, he always enjoyed the simplicity that some partners asked for. They didn’t need money and over the top ceremonies to symbolize their bond. Noya and Asahi were like that, foregoing some of the more extravagant details to focus on simply enjoying the experience of getting married. But it was obvious to Suga that if Noya asked for the moon, Asahi would get it for him, and Noya would steal the sun for Asahi while he was away.

“Did your parents get married before they opened their business?” Daichi’s question resulted in Suga shaking his head, eyes catching the sight of familiar buildings as the two drove back into town.

“No, though it was only about a year after they opened. The wedding was sort of rushed since my mom was about three months pregnant. Their parents planned the whole thing and it was quite terrible.”

“I could only imagine,” Daichi replied, seeming unsure of how to approach the subject. Suga gave a short wave to brush off the officer’s reservations, hoping his smile stayed strong as he spoke.

“They used to joke about it all the time. But for my 15th birthday, they let me plan a wedding for them. It was the first time I had been put in charge of a wedding, even if it was only a vow renewal. I tried to make it a wedding that felt more like them, and not what my grandparents wanted. That was the first time I knew I wanted to take over their business. The wedding wasn’t my best work, but it meant the most to me. I still keep a picture of it on my desk.”

“I wish I could have been there; I’m sure it was great.” Suga let his eyes drop back to the window, his voice low and mumbled.

“The rings that were stolen were used during their renewal vows. That’s why they were so important to me.”

“I’m sorry.” Was Daichi’s reply, a sturdy hand falling onto Suga’s. It was a phrase that Suga had heard several times in his life, but there was a genuine softness in Daichi’s words that made the wedding planner pause to take a shaky breath. The officer didn’t question the silence, which Suga was thankful for. It was strange how Daichi had learned his signs of distress so easily, despite only knowing the planner for three months. Normally Suga was skilled at keeping a cheerful composure in front of others, tricking his company into changing subjects and avoiding personal questions. But Daichi felt different.
“Me too,” Suga admitted quietly, knowing that Daichi was listening when he squeezed the planner’s hand. Feeling some of his sadness drip away, Suga laughed, shaking his head. “But you’re here now, and for that, you owe me a foot massage.”

“I don’t remember that being on the agenda,” Daichi replied, making the final turn into his apartment complex with a smile.

“Neither was murdering my precious feet, yet you managed to do that just fine.”

“It’s not my fault you’re so fit and unhealthy at the same time.” The unconscious compliment had Suga’s cheeks pink, though the full blush didn’t come until Daichi parked the car. “But I guess you deserve some sort of prize.”

“You don’t have to-” Suga started, Daichi quick to cut him off.

“I know.” Their eyes met over the middle console, the officer’s gaze steady with certainty and heat. The look sent a jolt through Suga’s stomach, his toes curling inside his toes reflexively. While the wedding planner enjoyed teasing Daichi, the sudden rush of being under the officer’s control sounded perfect. Slowly the officer entwined their fingers, keeping his deep stare locked on Suga. “Would...you like to come up?”

“Yes.” Suga should have been embarrassed by how his voice lowered at the immediate reply, but he couldn’t find it in him to blush. The shoulders of the officer were quick to relax after the answer, giving a short nod. On first glance, Daichi looked composed, but when the man almost forgot to shut off his car in his haste to unload their belongings, Suga hid his giggle behind his hand. Even when being aggressive, the officer held some modesty. The two carried their belongings up the stairs of the apartment complex, the fluffy white dog obediently walking beside his owner. The door of the apartment sounded heavy as it shut behind them, Suga’s eyes avoiding the taller man by his side. Instead, they traveled over the spacious living room while depositing the items in his possession onto the couch. Sugar yipped as he jumped onto his cushion, getting a soft pet on his head from the wedding planner who was thinking of something to break the suddenly awkward silence.

“Suga.” At the call of his name, the planner turned his head, warm palms cupping Suga’s cheeks to pull him closer. Daichi’s lips pressed to his own was a welcomed distraction that Suga didn’t know he desperately needed. Any thought of creating a conversation dissolved, Suga’s mouth releasing a quiet groan before kissing the officer back. Daichi’s mouth was hot and sweet, quieting the little noises that the wedding planner produced when his hands clutched the strong shoulders in front of him. It was effortless for the fair-haired man to lean into Daichi’s chest, deepening their kiss into something bordering sinful. The twitch of his mouth when the cop shivered was hidden, Suga’s hands quick to leave their post to drag down the firm muscle of Daichi’s back. The fabric that
bunched under his palms made the planner’s skin itch with the desire to yank it off. The thought was put on hold when the strong body in front of him pushed forwards, making the back of Suga’s thighs press into the couch’s armrest. Before he could lose his balance, large fingers were curling under him, Daichi not hesitating to hoist Suga’s body off the floor.

“Da-Daichi!” The squeak of embarrassment was meant to be a protest, but he didn’t think of pushing away as the officer’s hot lips latched under his ear teasingly. Heat shot through his body at the suckle of skin, the planner’s legs quick to wrap around the waist presented to him. He could feel Daichi walking, but hazel eyes were closed in pleasure. The sexual tension that had been flickering between them had finally burst into a full fire, the flames setting Suga’s skin on fire. Suga refused to stay useless in this, his hands resuming their quest to get rid of the cop’s shirt. He squirmed against his partner’s hips as he yanked the hem past his own thighs, Suga’s ear brushed with a groan from his companion.

“Don’t move like that.” There was a husky tone that normally didn’t take residence in Daichi’s voice, the borderline growl pressing the right buttons in the planner who made sure to increase the teasing rocking of his hips.

“Then help me get this off.” Brown met hazel for a moment of sexual simmering before Daichi sighed.

“Impatient.” His hands gave a soft squeeze to Suga’s thighs before pulling his hold back. Calf muscles tightened to make up the lack of support, Suga’s mouth feeling parched when the officer finished the job he had started. He knew his eyes were fixated on the tan skin now exposed to him, but the wedding planner made no move to hide his stare. Being an officer had its perks, Suga running his fingers over the broad chest in front of him. The light from the bedroom’s lamp was softer than the living room, giving a glow to the skin that contrasted the firm muscle under his fingertips.

“Okay,” Suga breathed out slowly, unsure what else could be said about the sexy man under him. He had been with attractive partners before, but somehow the way his pulse sped up when running his palm over Daichi’s heartbeat made him feel like a virgin. His world was shifted when Daichi moved forward, leaning his body down to drop his cargo onto the soft mattress.

“This is okay?” The words were mouthed over Suga’s pale neck while Daichi settled himself between the parted thighs presented to him, rough fingers catching the bottom of Suga’s shirt and pushing up his leaner body. The teasing trail the officer left on his stomach had Suga moaning, arching his back to feel more of the heated touch.

“Very okay,” was Suga’s reply, happy to assist his date in removing his shirt.
As soon as the piece of clothing hit the floor, Daichi pushed back onto his knees, his smoldering
stare now staring at Suga in silence. The smaller man tried not to blush under the steady gaze, his
fingers twitching by his sides when they dropped onto the comforter. There was no question that
Daichi found him attractive; he had felt the physical evidence pressed into his thigh when the
officer carried him to bed. Even now, the blown out pupils and flushed face Daichi wore showed
he was turned on just as much as Suga. But there was obvious hesitation from his partner, the dark-
haired man keeping his hand rested on the planner’s covered thighs. It only took Suga a second to
realize why Daichi wasn’t moving forward, and it made him smile.

“Stop being nervous, Daichi; I clearly want this.” The hands that were bunched in the sheets below
him were quick to move to help prove his point. He tried not to snicker at the way Daichi’s eyes
widened when his fingers trailed over the center of his chest, his thumb easily popping open the
button of his shorts. In seconds his capris joined his shirt on the floor. Suga pressed one of his
hands to the waistline of the cop’s shorts while the other reached up to Daichi’s awestruck face.

“Jesus,” Daichi breathed out, a shiver running through the officer’s body. Suga could feel his own
arousal flush against his grey boxer-briefs, the obvious arousal from before darkening a spot of the
fabric. He had no time to feel modest of his lack of clothing, Daichi’s heated stare showing he had
made the right choice.

“I thought this was supposed to be my prize, Daichi?” He emphasized his point by slipping his
fingers into the elastic of the other man’s shorts, pulling Daichi into a sensual kiss. His palm
rubbed slowly over Daichi’s concealed cock, earning himself a steady moan that echoed in the
planner’s open mouth. Their tongues were quick to meet while Daichi’s hips ground down into
Suga’s warm touch, the fair-haired man curling his fingers firmly around the arousal resting under
the boxers. Each thrust of the officer’s hips made Suga’s imagination spark, wondering if this
would be the same pace he would use if they-

“Fuck, Suga.” His wrist was yanked off its temporary home and pinned to the bed. The protest was
quick to voice itself but was drowned out when Daichi reclaimed the bruised lips under his own.
Their kiss lacked innocence, yet Suga couldn’t force himself to care when feeling the fabric of
Daichi’s shorts skim past his ankle. The hips that pressed into his own had the planner’s breath
evaporating, Suga grasping the back of Daichi’s shoulders from the pleasure. If the officer minded
the pain of nails digging into his skin, he said nothing, his tongue marking the collarbone presented
under him. Another strong thrust of Daichi’s hips made Suga’s lips part, his eyes squeezing shut
while he gasped.

His skin felt hypersensitive, the years of no sexual contact causing each brush of flesh to sideline
the planner. His tip was surely covered in precum now, his arousal twitching with each steady
grind from the officer. Daichi’s lips continued to mark his neck like he was designed to be between
Suga’s thighs, the aforementioned limbs quaking as they tried to part wider in pleasure. The
wedding planner’s back hadn’t touched the bed since Daichi descended on him, his spine arched
and aching with bliss. Eagerly he tried to press his own hips into the rocking, his panting breath filling the quiet humidity rising in the room. Strong palms pressed his waist back into the bed, leaving him helpless to the onslaught of heat swelling in his stomach. His ears barely picked up the broken versions of his name mumbled into his neck, Daichi’s teeth nipping the pulse that was close to bursting just under his skin.

“So go-good, feels so good...mo-more please, Daichi-ah!” Suga’s wish was granted instantly, his head slamming into the mattress beneath him when his date pressed his palms into the sensitive skin under his thighs and changed the angle of their hips. The sudden pressure rubbing into his cock was enough to twist the pleasure in his stomach tightly, teetering the planner on the edge of his orgasm. The officer looked swept up in his own desire, the thrusts of his body quickened to mirror his shortened breaths. Hungry lips devoured Suga’s as Daichi leaned forward, refusing to lose speed in their mindless grinding. The smaller man tried to respond to the kiss, but his mind was focused on the sensations of fabric and Daichi’s arousal rubbing into his own.

The sudden pause between their rocking motion made Suga whine, his teeth snagging Daichi’s lip to bite out his protest. He had been so close before Daichi decided to pull his hips away and force Suga’s thighs closer. The action was soon forgiven when the officer peeled the sticky undergarment down Suga’s pale legs, leaving him naked and trembling beneath Daichi. It didn’t take long for Daichi to tug his own boxers down, his free hand unable to resist running his palm across Suga’s sensitive inner thigh. The teasing touch made Suga’s cock twitch, the planner quick to part his legs again while taking in Daichi’s newly naked form. Everything about the officer was breathtaking. He ached to feel the man in front of him, and he let that be known when he used his grip on Daichi’s shoulders to tug him back between his legs. Precome and sweat made Daichi’s first grind inbearably sensual, the feeling of completion rushing back into Suga. Heavy breaths were puffed against Daichi’s throat as Suga tightened his grip, mentally pleading for the officer to finish completely wrecking him. Strong hands smoothed along Suga’s torso as his date thrust against him with unmeasurable strength. The sweet peppering of kisses down Suga’s throat contrasted the filthy mess their hips were making. Everything felt too hot, yet the wedding planner wanted nothing but to submerge himself in the bliss Daichi was creating.

And when the officer’s teeth grazed Suga’s sensitive earlobe, the dam finally broke. The moan that ripped through Suga’s lips gave a hint of Daichi’s name, his nails dragging over the shoulders of the officer in pleasure. Toes curled into the sweat-soaked comforter below him, his cock pumping his liquid arousal across his stomach. A tight grip captured Suga’s thighs, holding them apart as Daichi clenched his teeth and rocked his hips sharply. The intense pleasure was borderline painful for Suga, whose body twisted from the aftershocks of his orgasm. Another coat of wetness streaked along the pale skin, though Suga was too entrapped by the way Daichi bit his lip to try and hide his orgasm. Ears red from pleasure, the officer’s shoulders gave a quiet quake once the last pulse of his pleasure dripped out of him.

It didn’t take much for Suga to pull Daichi to the left, making the dark-haired man plop onto the side of the bed. Unable to fully turn to face his date because of his messy stomach, Suga’s head rolled to the side, watching brown eyes slowly flutter open again. He knew his smile was small as he lifted his hand, softly pressing it to the sweaty cheek of his companion.
“That was really nice.”

“Mhm,” was the answer he got, Daichi nuzzling the palm with his lips. The small kiss that was planted there made Suga’s heart melt, though he kept the thought to himself as Daichi closed his eyes again. “Waited far too long for that.”

“It’s cause you’re a gentleman,” Suga replied, smiling at the weak snort his counterpart made.

“Hajime would disagree.”

“Hm, maybe he’s right.”

“You traitor.” The response had the planner laughing, only being muffled when Daichi pushed up to kiss him again.

And for the first time in years, Sugawara felt whole.

~**~

Music, for Kageyama, had always played an important part of his life. His parents had met at a country concert and got married in the rock and roll hall of fame. Despite their scientific occupations (his mother a scientist and father an astronomist), the two were always playing different tunes in their house. From his mother’s storytelling, Kageyama was born to the cool voice of Stevie Wonder. He learned how to speak through song, though his voice was never meant for famous recognition. His love for singing died out through the years, but his ears were always open for a new song.

And when he baked a wedding cake, a playlist was sure to be queued and ready to be heard.

He wasn’t sure when he started to link music to specific weddings. If he had to guess, it was an accident that turned into an unspoken habit. Maybe he had struggled to understand the vision for someone’s design or was in a funk during that time. Maybe he had simply just gotten off the phone with his mother. Either way, Kageyama’s tradition had stuck throughout the years, and now he didn’t start a masterpiece without a set of songs already downloaded on his iPod. At the moment,
the playlist for the rustic wedding was echoing in the spacy kitchen as he whipped the lemon filling for the sponge cake now cooling on the rack. The introvert closed his eyes to listen to the twang of the old country song, feeling his shoulders dip in released tension.

But the shrill sound of ringtone broke any semblance of peace in the air.

“What the…” placing the bowl onto the counter to fish out his phone, Kageyama felt his eye twitch at the caller ID. His first instinct was to ignore it, but decided to answer when remembering this particular caller would have no problem spamming his phone. Wedging the device between his ear and shoulder, the grumpy baker paused the song that was just finishing to turn most of his attention to answering the phone. “Why are you calling me?”

“Wah, that’s so rude!” The loud voice of Hinata didn’t sit well against Kageyama’s eardrum, though he was given no time to complain. “I’m on my way over.”

“Obviously, it’s Wednesday.”

“Yeah, but this time is different! I need a huge favor.”

“No,” Kageyama replied instantly, moving his mixture into a piping bag and smirking at the squawk on the other side of the phone.

“You don’t even know what it is yet.”

“Knowing you, it isn’t something I want to do.”

“Just be ready for me, Bakayama!” And without a goodbye, a huffing Hinata ended the phone call. He knew, as he easily finished the cake that he was working on, that the call should have annoyed him more. What type of person calls someone while they’re already going to see them? It was a waste of time, in Kageyama’s opinion.

But it was the first time in weeks that the teacher sounded normal. Ever since Hinata had come to terms with his sexuality, it seemed the smaller man had been cautious around Kageyama. There was an obvious distance between them physically like a barrier had been produced without Kageyama’s knowledge. It wasn’t that Hinata was avoiding the baker; if anything, he was staying later than before on Wednesdays and he texted him more days than not. Kageyama had been
confused by the attention, but he didn’t vocalize it. Even when he wasn’t looking to Hinata, he could feel the teacher’s eyes on him, as if analyzing him. The notion that something so small could make Kageyama hot under the collar was confusing, and the dark haired man wasn’t sure what to do with the information. Their relationship was still...sensitive, built upon mandated meetings and forced partnership. But through the past month, there had been a shift. A shift that made Kageyama’s face heat up if he thought about it too long.

“Yo!” The loud shout from the newcomer in the kitchen made Kageyama jump, blue eyes glaring over to the triumphant smile plastered onto Hinata’s face. The little hand now swaying in the air was filled with the crumpled paper, the teacher’s step full of bounce as he made his way over toward his scowling counterpart. “You ready to do some baking?”

“Shouldn’t I be asking you that?” Kageyama answered easily, though a quick shake of Hinata’s head showed the man was implying something out of the ordinary.

“Not cakes, idiot. These!” Again the paper was thrust into the air, though this time it ended up closer to Kageyama’s face. Making his step back casual, the taller man managed to focus his stare onto the chicken scratch writing in front of him. It only took a second to realize that it was a recipe, the words ‘chocolate chip cookies’ barely legible at the top.

“Cookies.”

“Yup, cookies.”

“Why?”

“Because it’s the second to last week of school for my kiddos, and I promised them a desert. They took a vote, and this is what they wanted.” The explanation made sense to the baker, but he didn’t lift his scowl as he sent a casual glance away from the man vibrating in front of him.

“And this is my problem...why?”

“Don’t be like that.” The whine in Hinata’s voice tugged at something in Kageyama’s chest, blue irises peering from the corner of his eyes to see the downturned lips of his shorter friend. He hadn’t realized just how big the brown stare could get when they were accompanied with wobbling lips, seeming to do his best impression of a begging dog. His nose was slightly scrunched, and both hands were clasped in front of his chest in a praying motion. He looked pathetic, honestly, yet that
didn’t stop a weird thought from passing through Kageyama’s head.

_Cute._

“St-Stop begging, it’s weird.” Kageyama mustered out, turning away from the scene to grab the finished cake and moved it to the open stand. Once sure it was well balanced, the tall man turned back to the nuisance in his kitchen, making sure Hinata saw the roll of his eyes. “Fine, I’ll help you.”

“Wah, really?!”

“Just this once; this isn’t your personal playground,” Kageyama replied, though Hinata seemed too eager about the agreement to listen. He held out his larger hand for the recipe, though he doubted he’d actually need it. He specialized in cakes, but that didn’t mean he was useless in other forms of baking. Seeing that it was a basic recipe, Kageyama tossed the paper to the counter, easily gathering the supplies they would need. He searched his cabinet for vanilla and sugar, half listening to the excited tone coming from the teacher.

“The kids are going to be happy to hear that you made them! I’ve been bragging about all the cool cakes that you’ve made, so they are super jealous of me. When they hear that the great Kageyama baked their cookies—”

“You told them about me?” Kageyama’s eyebrow arched as he took a peek back at Hinata, the orange haired man blinking once before nodding.

“Obviously.”

“Oh.” A pause between their conversation made Kageyama’s eyes flicker to the oven, his chin tilting toward the appliance. “That needs to preheat to 350 degrees.”

“Right!” Hinata hummed as he moved over to the oven, his fingers clicking through the temperatures as he spoke. “My kids know all sorts of things about my life. But they really like hearing about you, since you’ve got a super cool job. What kid wouldn’t want to bake sweets every day of their life? So on Thursdays, when it’s nap time, I tell them a story about whatever cake or wedding you’re working on next. They love hearing about it!”
“You seem to really enjoy your job,” the baker answered, snagging two bowls from one of his cabinets. He kept one in front of himself, placing the other in front of the returning Hinata. Small hands wrapped around the plastic bowl, a grin splitting his lips as he nodded.

“I have the best job ever. All the kids are awesome, and I never get tired of learning more about them. Each one is different, but share some of the same problems. They just wanna be listened to, ya know? None of them are bad; they just need a little bit of understanding and encouragement to be the best they can be!” The baker tried to deny that when Hinata turned his face up to look at him, his breath caught. There was a certain tint of happiness that graced the teacher’s face when speaking of his job that had never been there before. His eyes sparkled, his cheeks brushed with the smallest of color even as he grinned with pride. The lack of space between them became overly evident now, Kageyama feeling the soft skin of Hinata’s arm brush his own. It shot a wave of heat through his body, his throat drying instantly. The nagging thought of how cute Hinata was came roaring back into the depths of Kageyama’s mind, staining his cheeks with red. He swallowed weakly, needing to drop his head to keep his voice from shaking at the revelation.

“Go get the chocolate chips from the closet next to the fridge.” He barked his order out with a little more bite than he wanted to, but he knew that it was the only way to keep his embarrassment hidden. His eyes stared down at the mixture of butter, brown sugar, and white sugar, ignoring the slight pinch of guilt in his stomach as Hinata huffed.

“No need to be rude, Bakayama.” Small feet shifted across the room, a silent sigh of relief pass through Kageyama’s lips. He closed his eyes, trying to focus on returning his body temperature to normal, but the thought was quick to disperse when Hinata’s voice echoed in the kitchen. “Eh? What’s this?”

“Huh?” Looking behind him, Kageyama’s spine tensed at the small iPod now fitting snugly in Hinata’s palm. Curious eyes stared down at the screen, though they slowly lifted back to face Kageyama with a tilt of the head.

“The Rustic Wedding Playlist? Since when do you listen to music while you bake?”

“Don’t go touching other people’s stuff!” Kageyama snapped out, but the mischievous grin now dancing over Hinata’s mouth proved he wasn’t scared. A click of the play button doused the room with the once paused music, a hiccup of silence between songs only lasting a moment. When the slow mixture of guitar and bass slipped through the air, a flash of recognition sparked in Hinata’s eyes, the man quick to drop the iPod back onto the counter.

“I know this song. This was one of the songs Asahi and Noya wanted to use for their wedding; I love this song!”
“Fantastic, now shut it-” But before the command could be ordered, Hinata was back in his space, excited hands rushing to grab onto his own. The unexpected touch made Kageyama tense, his heels quick to drag along the floor Hinata was now pulling him across. There was laughter in the teacher’s voice as he spoke, eyes still filled with excitement.

“We’ve got to dance to this!”

“What the hell?”

“I never got to dance with you, and you wasted all your time on Stingysama. Now it's our turn!”

“No way.” The stubborn glare he sent down to Hinata didn’t seem to phase the man, little palms pressed into his own as their arms swayed between them.

“C’mon, Kageyama. Don’t be like that. Just one little dance won’t kill us!” The glare stayed turned on the teacher, who let out a dramatic sigh. “Guess I have to take the lead, then.”

“What does that mean?” Confusion turned into mortification when Hinata started to ‘dance’, simultaneously belting out the lyrics to the chorus of the song. It was out of tune and shrill, but the shorter man didn’t seem to mind the horrible singing. Instead, he increased his volume toward the end of the chorus, his arms lifting to try and twirl Kageyama under them. The result was a forearm smacking into Kageyama’s temple, the baker’s fortitude easily snapping as he yanked the arms back down. “Alright, you win.”

“Sweet!”

“I don’t know why you want to dance with me,” grumbled Kageyama, his hands rearranging Hinata’s to where they needed to be. He was not going to humor the teacher with a full dance like before, though Hinata seemed content with a simple swaying that the baker was currently leading him through. The size difference between the two was highlighted when Kageyama placed his hand on Hinata’s back, the large palm fully pressed to the lower spine with ease. Fingertips felt the tremble of skin under them, but Kageyama was quick to toss the movement to heat difference as they moved with ease. Though he had felt tortured when trying to guide Tsukishima in dance moves, Hinata was easily led, little feet following his steps without him having to tell him where to go. It seemed that he had taken Yamaguchi’s lesson to heart, and Kageyama felt something quiver in his chest when amber eyes peeked up at him.
“Why don’t you like dancing?” The softness in Hinata’s tone felt out of place for the loud teacher, though it meshed well with the gentle sway of their bodies and the country music in the air.

“Because I feel stupid doing it,” he admitted, knowing it was something he disliked confessing to. Having confident people like Oikawa and Kuroo around made it hard to feel comfortable with his own dancing skill. Suga always praised the man with his quiet movements, and he had never heard complaints about his teaching style before Tsukishima. Even still, the intimacy and mutual connection needed between dancing partners never felt genuine to the baker, making him draw back from dancing unless ordered to. Even now, as he casually moved their dancing around the warm kitchen, Kageyama felt hypervigilant, his fingers close to sweating as they linked easily between the ones presented to them.

“But I like how you dance.” Honestly shone in Hinata’s features and tone as he responded, Kageyama feeling his eyes widen at the admission.

“You do?” His feet halted mid-step, making Hinata bump into his body. Worried that his dance partner would fall, Kageyama pressed his hand firmer onto the back of the teacher, unintentionally pulling their bodies closer. Now unable to run from the statement, a panicked Hinata gave nervous laugh and nodded through a stiffened stance.

“Yeah, I, uh...I do like…” Hinata’s words tapered off, but the effect of the sentence was quick to reveal itself. Their faces were both red, though the baker wasn’t sure if it was from the preheating oven or the underlying emotions desperate to burst out. The music seemed to intensify at the final bridge of the song, blue and amber refusing to part as the words caressed their ears.

When I’m a ship tossed around on the waves
Up on a highwire that's ready to break
When I’ve had just about all that I can take
Baby you, baby you save me

Small hands-on Kageyama’s face was the only warning he got before he was pulled down into a kiss he hadn’t known he had been needing until this very moment. It was impossible to pull away from the sweet mouth against his, Kageyama’s mind hazy as he leaned lower into Hinata’s touch. Everything about the kiss felt right, Kageyama unable to resist the urge to grasp Hinata’s waist between his hands to pull him closer. If the teacher minded, he showed no sign of it, clammy fingers sliding down from warm cheeks to wrap around the solid neck of the baker. The music fizzled out of his mind, the baker concentrating of the soft pressure that was sending tiny shockwaves through his skin. Hinata didn’t shy away from the kiss, Kageyama closing his eyes when realizing the teacher was also lost to the confusing sensation.
But after a few seconds, it was obvious that Hinata was strained from the movement, his toes holding his weight from the difference in height. The logic that shouldn’t have been available had Kageyama lifting Hinata into the air, only having to take two steps to place his butt onto the counter behind them. There was a hum of appreciation against his mouth, showing that the teacher welcomed the change of location. The worn out hands of the baker now pressed into the marble counter, enjoying the quiet kiss shared between the two. The smaller hands stayed linked behind his neck, a feeling Kageyama enjoyed far too much. The two were only willing to part their mouths when the air became depleted. A smaller kiss was pressed up into his lips again, though it barely lingered a moment before pulling back again. Kageyama quietly opened his eyes, listening to the final chords of the song fade away as Hinata’s eyelids fluttered open. Amber eyes looked dazed as fingers pressed over the pinkened lips, the teacher’s voice shaky and quiet.

“Bwah.”

“Bwah?” He was trying to be cautious around Hinata, silently wondering if he should have allowed the moment to happen. Years of time and acceptance had made kissing another man okay in his mind, even if he felt something completely different than his previous kisses heating the blood in his veins. The man sitting on the counter had no experience with men, and Kageyama mentally swore when the teacher’s shoulders tensed over the counter.

“That was really... bwah. I….I ha-have to go.” Quicker than the baker could blink, Hinata was rushing off the counter, nearly slamming into the cake rack (again) as he made his escape from the kitchen.

“But we didn’t make-”

“I’ll see you tomorrow at the party!” The statement made Hinata pause in the middle of his sprint, wide eyes quick to turn back and look at the baker. “You’re...still going, right?”

“Obviously, dumbass. Why wouldn’t I?” The snappy tone he used didn’t seem to bother Hinata, whose smile was nearly blinding.

“Awesome!” Then, as if remembering his previous humility, Hinata squeaked, quick to scamper away again. It was almost comical, seeing Hinata smash into the doorframe because he couldn’t keep himself from looking back at the stunned baker in the kitchen. The redness of his cheeks was obvious to Kageyama, but there was little hint that it was from regret. It took nearly a minute after Hinata had left the scene for Kageyama to lift his arm, pressing the back of his wrist to his mouth as he glanced over to the unfinished batter now tipped over from their previous activity.
“Dumbass,” he mumbled quietly, scoffing to himself in annoyance.

But even his wrist couldn’t stop the rare smile from blossoming against the skin when thinking of the shared kiss.

Chapter End Notes

Lots of cute moments! Lots of unspoken feelings! And with the birthday bonanza coming up, one has to wonder what is in store for our volleydorks. Will Kageyama and Hinata talk about their kiss? Will the party go the way Oikawa expects it to? Will couples become closer, the same, or simply a hot mess? Kudos, comments, and patience my dear friends! =)

Next Chapter: A Party for Two
Party For Two

Chapter Summary

The party of the century is at full speed, with some surprising results.

Chapter Notes

Ah! It’s Sunday! Totally a day later than what I am supposed to post this chapter, which I am totally sorry for. But yesterday was my grandmother’s birthday and my brother is a Veteran, so it was kind of a busy day for me! ^.^ Hope you all forgive me, and enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Suga was surprised at the venue that Oikawa had chosen for their party. The large building was filled with energetic lights and sounds, though the adult arcade was only part of the buzz. There was an area for bowling, while the back of the venue had pool tables and darts. A sectioned off area had rooms for karaoke, and the center held a bar with several well-educated bartenders. There was even a place to order food if the customers got hungry. The people in the establishment were around the same age as them, and it was a well-kept business from what the wedding planner could observe. Each of the employees was friendly and helpful, which was a blessing with how quickly the group separated upon arrival.

Yamaguchi and Hinata had joined forces at the start of the night once the birthday boy realized his original partner in crime was nowhere to be seen. Though most of the ‘Little Crows’ crew had come in the same car, Kageyama had a couple whose limited free time meant they could only meet on Thursdays. The baker hadn’t minded driving himself, as he had to stop by his apartment before coming to the event. The moment that the preschool teacher had noticed Kageyama’s absence, he had grabbed onto the florist, demanding the two play pool. Tanaka and Noya were quick to jump on the bandwagon, challenging the pair to ‘pool shots’, a game that screamed bad decisions to Suga. But the men were all adults, and it was Hinata’s birthday as well. So quietly, the wedding planner allowed them to go create mischief at the pool tables. Tsukishima decided to follow, stating “drunk idiots with heavy objects” was an opportunity too good to miss.

The darts area was home to a competition between Asahi, Iwaizumi, and Daichi. The men spoke with smiles and laughter between words, yet it was obvious to see that two of the men took the game seriously. The fire of competition between Daichi and Iwaizumi seemed to grow with each precise shot of a dart. The obvious panic in Asahi’s gaze was almost humorous as he glanced at the two men, seeking silent help from the pair chatting politely at the table next to them. Ennoshita gave a look of sympathy but seemed to know better than to get between the two cops. Kenma lacked any interest in participating in a rescue, his eyes continuously flickering between the
psychology student and the game boy laying on his lap. The groom was left on his own, a fate Suga wasn’t sure he’d wish upon his worst enemy.

“Can I have another round of drinks for my friends?” The overly pleased tone of the assistant made Suga turn back to the bar, glancing at the man sitting to his left. With perfectly combed hair and a shirt that was practically painted on his chest, Oikawa looked like he owned the venue as he gave a wink to the giggle bartender. “I can’t let the birthday boy stay sober at his own party. If I did that, I’d be the worst host in the world!”

“Coming right up, sir,” The girl responded, moving down the bar to make the drinks requested. Suga laughed despite the roll of his eyes, nudging his assistant with his elbow.

“I’m not getting drunk; I still have responsibilities tomorrow.”

“I refuse to accept that as an answer,” Oikawa replied, showing his streak of stubbornness with an upturned nose and crossed arms.

“There’s nothing wrong with you letting loose, bossman.” Kuroo’s smooth voice was echoed by the glass now pressed to his lips, swallowing his beverage before he tilted the cup toward the wedding planner. “That’s the whole reason I’m not drinking tonight, remember?”

“I thought it was because you weren’t sure you could play nice with a particular photographer?” Oikawa was quick to whistle an innocent tune when the cameraman turned his gaze on him, though Kuroo didn’t show anger at the remark. With a languid shrug of his shoulders, the man leaned back in his chair, letting his fingers tangle behind his head.

“I can have multiple motives. I am a man who wears many hats.” The sly grin catching the side of Kuroo’s mouth made Suga laugh, making sure to thank the bartender as a glass of golden ale was placed in front of him. Taking a quiet sip of the alcoholic beverage, Suga let the fizz of the cider slide down his throat before he spoke.

“How is Kenma handling the change in your friendship?”

“Well, he hasn’t run yet, so I’d like to say well. Everything still feels unreal. Like I’m going to wake up and it’ll be a really nice dream or something.” The dark haired man let his eyes glance across the room to the editor in question, his eyes lingering as he continued. “I’m…trying to take it slow.”
“You, the supernova of bedside pleasure, taking it slow? Lame.” Oikawa pressed the straw of his frozen margarita between his lips, sucking up his own beverage with little sign of restraint.

“Not lame; it’s romantic. You’re doing the right thing, Kuroo. Kenma will realize what a catch you are before you know it.” Suga emphasized his response with a comforting hand on his friend’s shoulder, Kuroo letting the moment lapse into silence before he gave a slow chuckle.

“More surprising things have happened before. Case and point; Tooru threw a party at a suitable place for once.”

“Hey, I resent that! I am the king of throwing amazing parties, and my ideas always work out wonderfully.” Oikawa’s reply made the attention flip to the assistant, Suga making sure his eyebrow was arched in skepticism.

“How was I supposed to know our blessed buttercup was so innocent? One lapdance should not cause a nosebleed.” The pout on the pretty lips of their co-worker made the other two burst into laughter, Suga trying to hide his giggles with another gulp of his drink. Despite wanting to stay sober, he could feel the natural sway of inhibition that came when drinking start to swirl in his stomach. Oikawa seemed to pick up on this as well, the brunet leaning over to drop his chin onto Suga’s shoulder. “You think I can get you drunk enough to ask Daichi-san for a lapdance? He’s got the thighs for it.”

“Stop obsessing over his legs!” Suga gasped out between laughter, his eyes filled with buzzed coyness as he glanced over at his mischievous friend. “Besides, I don’t need to be drunk to get that kind of attention from him.”

“Sugawara Koushi, did you do the dirty with Officer Sawamura?” Kuroo’s low whistle after his question had Oikawa jerking his head back in horror, though Suga only blushed and pulled his drink back to his lips. Realizing what he had just said, Suga tried to keep his voice from giving anything else away.

“Not...exactly.”

“And what does that mean, bossman?”
"I plead the fifth." The ale went down smoother this time with the help of an overdramatic gasp from his left, Oikawa making his protest clearly known.

“Hacks! I call hacks!” Pretty fingers gripped the once perfect hairstyle and Oikawa dropped his elbows onto the bar, his grumble pressed against the tip of his straw. “I don’t know if I’m more proud of you for making a move or livid that I am becoming the third wheel of ’Little Crows’. Pretty soon I’ll just be bouncing around from couch to couch in all of your perfect little houses because nobody wants me. This is a nightmare.”

“At this rate, it looks like Yams may get laid before you. Seems poetic, in a way.” Kuroo’s teasing remark received a glare from his tortured co-worker, the cameraman snickering as he jumped off his seat. “I’m gonna go check in with Kenma.”

“You go do that, your traitor. I’ll remember this betrayal when I do dirty things on your couch,” Oikawa grumbled, Kuroo continuing to laugh as he departed.

“Don’t you think you’re being a little overdramatic?” Suga asked, Oikawa replying with a moan of distress before he waved to the bartender again.

“Can I get four birthday cake shots?”

“Four?” Suga asked with a tilt of his head, the assistant turning his chair around to face the open floor of the venue with determination.

“If I’m going to die a born again virgin, I’m getting drunk while doing it. Iwa-chan! Chibi-Kun! Come get your birthday presents from your darling host!” The call of the nicknames caught the attention of the men of the hour, Oikawa curling his finger to reel in both of his victims. Suga shook his head with a smile, knowing his assistant wouldn’t be deterred from his mission. Once Oikawa found a new project, it was nearly impossible to get him to lose interest. Instead, Suga finished the cider in his cup before placing the glass back to the bar, nearly knocking the empty cup over when an orange mop of hair rammed into his side.

“Shouyou? Is everything okay?” Giving a gentle pat on the smaller man’s head, Suga waited patiently for the teacher to lift his flushed face. Brown eyes were obviously hazy with the signs of intoxication, though it wasn’t enough for the younger man to be deemed drunk. Buzzed seemed a better fit as Hinata yanked a chair between Suga and Oikawa and climbed into it.
“Where’s Kageyama? It’s been forever!” The information was easy to obtain from Hinata’s loose lips, Suga trying to keep his smile small as he glanced at the clock.

“He’ll be here as soon as he can. Just try to be a little more patient, okay?”

“But he’s supposed to be celebrating my birthday with me. It’s totally okay for me to be selfish on this day!” Suga wanted to remind the teacher that it wasn’t technically his birthday, but Hinata’s alcohol infused mouth was moving too fast to interject. “And now everyone’s got their person and my person isn’t here. He’s probably off being someone else’s pe-person or something.”

“Ah, my poor, naive, Chibi-kun.” The coo of Oikawa’s sweet voice set off warning bells to Suga, who sent a wary glance to his tailor. Iwaizumi seemed to catch on as well, making a point to smack his shoulder into Oikawa’s back when sitting on the opposite side of the brunet.

“Don’t take advantage of drunk kids, Shitty-kawa.”

“I’m not, honest!” Yet even with the innocent tint to his voice, Oikawa’s eyes were filled with trouble as he laid an arm around Hinata’s shoulders. “I just want to give my sexually confused friend some hints to help seduce his person.”

“This has bad written all over it,” Suga replied, but Hinata’s wide eyes now stared up at (or as close to what his buzzed eyesight could locate as) Oikawa, hands quick to ball into his lap.

“You think I could do that?” It seemed the side of sobriety in Hinata kicked up once in protest, the cheeks of the teacher flushed as he fumbled to explain. “N-Not that I’m saying I want to d-do anything with Ba-Bakayama!”

“There’s no need to be shy. We’re all friends here.” Yet to Suga, the scene looked closer to a wolf playing with his prey before the kill. A slender finger lifted to Hinata’s neck, the fingertip making an invisible line over the Adam's apple that was quick to bob at the unexpected touch. Once reaching the teacher’s chin, Oikawa tilted the face to look up at his own. Lacking any self-reservations, the tailor leaned closer to the blushing man, his words saturated in inappropriate sexual undertones. “And as friends, we want you to experience every sensation your body craves. So if you feel the need to claim someone as your property in order to delve into your deepest desires, who can judge?”
“...I...uh...” It was clear that Hinata’s mind was a mixture of alcohol and hormones, leaving rational thought out to dry as he melted like putty into the older man’s hands.

“I’m telling you, Chibi-chan, that you need to give it up already. It’s obvious who you want. And the moment you finally admit the truth, the sooner you can see where this rabbit hole leads you.” Flushed cheeks and parted lips proved the truth that everyone but the rebellious teacher knew; Hinata was not straight. Smirking at his own internal victory, Oikawa only got to revel in his deconstruction of Hinata’s mind for a moment. A rough grip on the back of his collar was followed by him getting tugged back hard into the solid chest of the officer behind him. Blinking once at his new position, Oikawa lifted his head back to see a scowling Iwaizumi glaring down at him.

“What did I say?” The growl that lingered in the officer’s voice sent a chill down Oikawa’s spine, the tailor immersing himself in the feeling that bordered danger.

“What are you, the fun police?” The tension between their stares felt like static shock, the buzz of his drink and being pressed into Iwaizumi’s chest egging him to push the envelope.

“Shouyou, why don’t we go do some karaoke. How does that sound?” There was no verbal response to Suga’s suggestion, but the sound of chairs squeaking against the floor proved that the two were leaving the pair alone at the bar. Oikawa sighed as he heard them leave, his eyes finally pulling away from the intense stare above him to look at the four shot glasses.

“Aw, they didn’t even take their drinks!” Oikawa wrapped his fingers around one of the glasses, lifting the rim to his lips before turning his attention to the sole birthday participant at the bar. “Are you going to help me drink these, or should I call chibi-kun back?”

“Shut up,” Iwaizumi snapped out, swiping one of the shots and easily draining it. The smirk of the tailor was hidden behind the liquor he was swallowing, letting the burn of the vodka hit his throat with little resistance. Once satisfied he had cleaned out the glass, he placed it back on the bar top, swiveling his chair to face the grumpy cop beside him.

“Don’t be like that.” Letting his fingers walk up the bare bicep of the shorter man, Oikawa tried to ignore how good the tan skin felt under his touch while keeping his teasing light. “You know you’re the only one I’ve got my eye on.”

“Is that a fact?” The olive gaze that found his caught the tailor off guard, Oikawa feeling his stomach flop in surprise when a warm hand slid onto the top of his thigh. “You may know some shit about seduction, but what can do you when you actually catch something you can’t handle?”
“Are you challenging my ability?” Oikawa asked breathlessly, trying to ignore the rare warmness in his cheeks from the electricity in the air between them. Space was an afterthought when the officer slid closer, grabbing the third shot between them. The movement brought their bodies close, Iwaizumi’s mouth mere inches from Oikawa’s ear.

“If I wanted to challenge it, I could think of a more effective way than talking.”

The implication in Iwaizumi’s voice rendered the tailor’s vocal chords useless to rebuttal. Oikawa’s pants suddenly felt way too tight, yet he wanted to submerge in the heat rushing through him. Each nerve in his body was lit on fire with desire, making the hand resting on the officer’s bicep tense. The slow roll of a chuckle proved that Iwaizumi felt it, the dark-haired man pulling back to casually tilt the shot back into his mouth. Watching the ripple of the cop’s throat when swallowing his liquor felt more sensual than any sexual encounter the assistant had been a part of. The clink of the glass hitting a hard surface felt distant from Oikawa, but the twitch of a smirk on his companion’s face made him focus on the lips now parting in front of him.

“You know, you never got me a present.” The arrogant tone that matched the fire in the officer’s eyes snapped the assistant into action, his free hand snagging the front of Iwaizumi’s v-neck and yanking him forward. He could feel his previous awe dissolve instantly, fingers clenched into the soft fabric while mouthing his response into parted lips.

“Let me fix that.”

In all the years the man had worked at ‘Little Crows’, Oikawa never kissed first. It was a rule he had made sacred since starting his game of seducing wedding members. To get his target to cave first was the objective. No matter how much he teased and flirted, it had to be the other that broke down and craved his touch. That was how he kept in control of his sexual escapades. To cave first was to give up the power in the balance between the two. He was a sore loser, and would rather let a catch go (which never happened) than admit defeat with wanting the intimacy more.

But when he smashed his lips into Iwaizumi’s for the first time, it felt like the battle had just begun. He didn’t care that his nails may have been digging into the muscle of the officer as he pushed closer to him, his chair tilting forward to get better leverage. The passion, the tension, the unresolved emotions charging through him were all poured into the mouth under his. Oikawa’s tongue did not hesitate to claim the lips which had parted like they had no other option. The air was heavy around them, though the steady hands firmly gripping both of Oikawa’s thighs made the venue feel like the Arctic in comparison. Iwaizumi was not idle in the exchange, his chin lifting up to slot their mouths closer and seal any chance of air escaping between them. Teeth were pressed into his lower lip for a burst of painful pleasure, the tailor’s hips jerking once in protest of being ignored. The movement was hindered by the hands on his thighs and feeling of being held down
only raised the levels of arousal coursing through Oikawa’s veins. The bitter taste of vodka was exchanged between their lips and tongues, a muffled moan deposited into the officer’s mouth. Oikawa kept kissing until his lungs burned, his mind fuzzy from the booze and the flourishing high of finally tasting the infuriating man.

The break of the kiss was as harsh as the start, both men panting as the chairs rocked back onto all four legs. Lazily, Oikawa ran his tongue over the bitten spot to assure himself that he wasn’t bleeding. He had never been a huge fan of pain, disliking the marks that could be left in the wake of it. But somehow, as his tongue traveled the small indents in his flesh, the tailor wondered how Iwaizumi’s bite would feel like against his neck. Once done with his check-up, the brunet focused back on his companion, who had yet to release Oikawa’s thighs from his grasp. Their eyes were careful to meet again, Iwaizumi narrowing his slowly.

“That’s not a present, Shittykawa.”

“And here I thought that I got your bite of approval.” Olive eyes flickered to his mouth at the reply, sharply returning to their original focus. Oikawa felt smug in his response, ready to engage in another battle of the tongues (words or literally, whichever came first). But as quickly as the glare had formed, Iwaizumi softened, his forehead dropping to hit into Oikawa’s.

“A present would be going on a date with me.” The response was formed as a statement, but the tailor was positive that Iwaizumi meant it as a request. Even if it was technically his birthday present, the officer wouldn’t push the subject unless it was consensual. Even if he tried to act tough, Tooru knew the law-upholder didn’t mess with particular lines. He was too straight edged for that. What normally would be considered a turn off to the wild child didn’t feel quite as uncomfortable with the man waiting silently for his answer. In fact, if he let his heart have a moment to voice itself, the annoying organ may highlight the increase in beats since their kiss. Even now, his thighs tingled from the prolonged connection between them, the tailor fighting himself from leaning into the touch. Troubled by his unwelcomed thoughts, Oikawa let his eyes travel back to the wood of the bar, lingering on the lone shot left. He was quick to down it, his smile alluring when finally answering his companion.

“When would you like your present, Iwa-chan?”

_Y**_
his system. His parents weren’t drinkers, either, and most people knew him well enough to not push him on the subject.

But Hinata was persuasive, Tsukishima was too attractive, and suddenly a shot didn’t sound so dangerous. The first part of his downfall was when the baker had to come later than the others. Hinata was in need of a new friend to distract him from the ‘idiot’, and Yamaguchi was never good at saying no to puppy dog eyes. A game of pool didn’t sound too hard to play, the florist always enjoying geometry. He didn’t want to underestimate their opponents, but the brunet felt confident that his intelligence would help compare to Noya’s practiced skill. But when someone announced the concept of ‘pool shots’, a game in which each ball pocketed resulted in the other team taking a shot, Yamaguchi felt his hope burst. His mouth was quick to think of an excuse to get out of the new rules, but a snort to his left paused him.

“None of you are going to last the whole game.”

Which lead to the second part of Yamaguchi’s...problem. Tsukishima Kei knew how to clean up, which the freckled man was already aware of. He wore a suit like he was the first man to design the concept. It was the only style that the lawyer had shown since the two had met. None of that bothered Yamaguchi, as he enjoyed the aesthetic of Tsukishima in a suit. But the dress attire for the bar was much more relaxed, and the blond wore casual clothes to the party. The black hoodie had ditched its sleeves during manufacturing, his blue tank top more form-fitting than any previous suit. Even his pants seemed tailored to his lean form, his back pockets cupping the curve of his rear like a second skin. And with the lack of sleeves, the matching henna tattoo the pair wore was on display for all to see. Yamaguchi couldn’t stare at the man for more than a moment before his felt his body reacting, an embarrassing situation that made the florist rush into anything that would distract him.

Which brought him back to current predicament.

“He said what?” Yamaguchi felt his smile refusing to stay down as he leaned against Hinata on the couch, their shoulders being the only things keeping either of them up. His eyes were half-lidded eyes as they watched Tanaka and Noya belting out the worst version of “Bohemian Rhapsody” the florist had ever heard. It was their fourth performance on the karaoke machine, Hinata and Yamaguchi continuing to cheer enough for the duo to find another song to sing. In a sober state, the brunet was sure he would have made an excuse to leave the room to find a missing blond. But the world was still swimming too much for him to want to move.

“That I’m supposed to...claim Kageyama.” The words were spoken with inconsistent volume, and the emphasis he put on the word made Yamaguchi burst into laughter. His cheeks hurt from how much he had smiled throughout the night. It wasn’t his event, but the good vibes that the wedding party provided made him relax.
“So like...like a...uh...” Yamaguchi closed his eyes for a moment, allowing his mind to try and search for the word he knew was floating somewhere in his brain. “A pet?”

“Kageyama’s not a dog, Yams.” Yamaguchi nodded a few times, though stopped quickly when feeling the swishing in his head. It was an uncomfortable feeling, but if he didn’t move, then it was bearable. He tried to think of something else, repeating the sentence to think of a reply.

“He seems more like a cat.”

“Yeah, he does!”

“Kage-Neko.” He was never good at coming up with nicknames, but his drunk mind was sure it could turn the cat pun into a joke. “Kage-meow. Meow-Yama? Which one sounds better?”

“...I don’t know.” Yamaguchi took time to open his eyes, turning his attention back to the now somber man slouched on the couch. Brown eyes were dull in the flashing lights, staring at the hands resting on his stomach. “But you can’t claim a cat. Cats are just...weird. And stubborn. They act like they like you but you just...just never know. Ya know? A-And they always do that thing.”

“I hate that thing.” Yamaguchi had no clue what ‘that thing’ was, but it sounded really bad and it made Hinata’s eyes water. The florist was never quite as helpful as Suga in emotional situations, and adding alcohol wasn’t helping his mouth produce sage advice. Instead, his thoughts wandered, the next sentence slipping out without warning. “I kind of claimed Tsukki.”

“What?! The sudden absence of Hinata’s shoulder made Yamaguchi fall back onto the couch, the brunette blinking in confusion. He wasn’t sure if the ceiling was moving, or if his eyes were saturated with bourbon. They had drank a lot of shots, after all. Yamaguchi slowly tilted his head to the side, realizing where his support had gone. Hinata was kneeling on the floor in front of the couch, Noya and Tanaka doing air guitars as a background drop. “He let you claim him?”

“Maybe.” It wasn’t his fault that the lawyer’s tattoo had constantly teased the corner of his eye throughout the night, his skin burning under the flimsy sleeve he wore. A sleeve that had been rolled up as the alcohol heated his blood, making his own mark visible for all to make the connection. Remembering this, Yamaguchi flopped his arm out to Hinata, his smile giggly as he wiggled the useless appendage. “We’re destiny.”
“Yuck.” Yet even as Hinata said it, his hands were pressing to the forearm Yamaguchi presented to him, tracing the stars speckled on the freckled skin. The giggles were back between the two, Yamaguchi too ticklish and Hinata too drunk. Or maybe they were both drunk. Either way, Yamaguchi stopped when Hinata spoke again. “I felt like...like really good ki-kissing him. Like a superhero!”

“Kissing…Kageyama?”

“Yeah,” Hinata breathed out, their conversation falling silent. Yamaguchi’s licked his lips nervously, wondering why it took this long for him to realize how dry his mouth was. Kageyama and Hinata had...kissed? Even though Hinata was still unsure of how to claim the baker? The thought burrowed into his skull like a drill, painful and confusing. The momentary distraction was lost at the vibration of the couch, the florist blinking one before groggily patting under the cushion his head was on. It took less time than he expected to find the annoying device, Yamaguchi not recognizing the phone. He did, however, know the name on top of the text message notification.

“Neko-Yama is texting you.”

“Yes?” The flush on the teacher’s face wasn’t from the heated room as he fumbled with his password three times before unlocking the phone, his eyes bright when opening the text. “He’s here.”

“Then go claim him.” Hinata was stumbling out of the doorway while Yamaguchi gave a weak thumbs up from his spot on the couch. And as the door to the karaoke room swung closed, Yamaguchi felt his eyes flutter shut. The energy that had felt endless an hour ago was completely zapped from his body. The couch wasn’t the comfiest object Yamaguchi had laid on, but it was heaven compared to the hard bar chairs. The loud noise of the karaoke machine was now gone, the destructive duo seeming distracted by something in the arcade. There was some noise from the muffled venue beyond the door, yet Yamaguchi had no desire to go rediscover it. Oikawa had rented out the room for the night, meaning the man wasn’t going to be disturbed by a stranger. And his stomach wasn’t really feeling good-

“You alive?” Yamaguchi’s chest bloomed with warmth at the way Tsukishima’s voice felt sliding through his ear. The reflexive smile that tickled his lips made him giggle, only opening one eye when hearing the lawyer scuffle closer.

“Tsukki.”

“Not drunk enough to forget names, I see.” Letting out a slow sigh, Tsukishima dropped onto the
only cushion that Yamaguchi’s body wasn’t occupying. Blond hair seemed more unruly than normal, and an impulse to run his fingers through it had Yamaguchi pushing up from the cushions he had been committed to making his makeshift bed seconds ago. “Do you really want to move? You’re drunk-”

“’m not drunk,” Yamaguchi mumbled instantly, unsure why he felt he needed to refute the claim with the lawyer. Several times throughout the night he had been sure he was drunk before engulfing another shot Hinata handed him. Even as he wobbled onto his knees on the couch, he was positive his ability to focus on a single object in the room was impossible. That didn’t stop him from trying to catch Tsukishima’s gaze with his own, noticing the arched eyebrow sent his way.

“Well, you can’t hold your liquor.” As if the sentence was supporting Yamaguchi, the florist stumbled forward, his hands quick to grab onto Tsukishima’s shoulders. Starting to realize his level of inebriation was embarrassing, the freckled man blushed, though he wasn’t sure it could feel separated from his original drunk flush. A sigh could be heard over his lowered head, but Yamaguchi felt too ashamed to look up. The waves of emotion were harder to control under the influence, and each small comment or action from the blonde hit the florist like a tsunami.

“Sorry.”

“I blame Hinata, mostly. If he wasn’t having a pity party for himself over the moron, then you wouldn’t have felt obligated to drink.” The reminder of Hinata and Kageyama brought back the conversation about kissing, or rather, the lack of kissing between Tsukishima and himself. The paste that decorated his tan skin prickled like an actual tattoo. Despite what he had said to Hinata, he knew the truth; the brand would only remain for a few more weeks. The same could be said about him and Tsukishima’s time together. The wedding was fast approaching, meaning their opportunities to see each other would diminish. No matter the result of the bet, their connection would be severed. Tsukishima would return to his life as a lawyer, and Yamaguchi his florist business. He’d return to his life without…

“Tsukki.”

“Hmm?” The brunet didn’t hesitate to move forward, using his leverage on Tsukishima’s shoulders to straddle the lap of the lawyer. The warmth of the body under his was pleasant, Yamaguchi leaning forward to gain access to as much of the feeling as he could. Stunned golden eyes stared up at him from skewed glasses, Yamaguchi’s unsteady hands leaving their posts to cup the pale cheeks under him. He was sure his emotions were transparent on his face as he let his thumbs caress the cheekbones of the blond, trying to memorize the sharpness and defined nature they held. The plastic of Tsukishima’s glasses brushed the edge of Yamaguchi’s thumbs, the brunet giving a wobbly smile when righting the eyewear.
“You have really pretty eyes, Tsukki.” The darkness of the unused room couldn’t hide the change of Tsukishima’s cheek color, the aforementioned gaze darting to the side to avoid observation.

“You are quite drunk.” The statement sounded more like an excuse than a response, and Yamaguchi held the face tighter as he shook his head. The punch in his stomach reminded him of its protest in sharp movement, but Yamaguchi ignored it to press the conversation.

“I think this stuff sober, too. I’m just...nervous.”

“Of me?”

“Of my feelings,” Yamaguchi answered honestly, knowing he would regret this in the morning. The statement returned Tsukishima’s eyes back onto his, and Yamaguchi’s chest swelled with excitement and fear.

“Which are?” Distantly, he could feel a steady weight on one side of his waist, but the corner of his mind was too buzzed to investigate further. For now, his focus was on the face of the man under him, wanting his lips to express all the unspoken words he’d had since they first met. It was an overwhelming feeling, and his body was quick to give out under the pressure. Yamaguchi didn’t fight his desire to lean forward, eyes watching the lips trained in the art of sharp wit and sarcasm. He wanted to memorize them on his own, so that no matter what happened tomorrow, Yamaguchi would know what it felt like to kiss Tsukishima Kei.

But his body had finally had enough.

“Ugh.” A groan passed through his mouth as his forehead dropped onto Tsukishima’s shoulders, each muscle losing their semblance of working as they tried to mold with the lawyer’s chest. The world wouldn’t stop turning, so Yamaguchi closed his eyes, unsure if the pathetic whine in his head verbalized itself. His stomach discomfort was at full force now, and the man was sure if he tried to pull himself back up, the results wouldn’t be pretty. Yamaguchi’s eyes watered behind his lids from the sudden desire to cry in discomfort, and it showed in the waver in his voice. “I don’t...feel good.”

“Fantastic.” Yamaguchi flinched at the sarcasm, but he didn’t pull away when two supporting arms shoved under his thighs. Somewhere, he knew he should have been embarrassed. But the sick feeling was sideling him, and the florist could only wrap his arms around the blonde’s neck tightly in response. With a strength that was unexpected, Tsukishima was able to push off the
couch with his legs, standing with ease despite the lack of his arms. The swishing in his belly made the brunet whine, pressing his freckled face into the pale neck to try and keep his bearings. “I’m taking you home.”

“Okay.” He wanted to fight, but even a drunk Yamaguchi knew it was foolish to try and argue with the lawyer. Even when at full capacity, the florist rarely won an argument with a man who made it his career to debate. Instead, he simply tried to relax his body as Tsukishima moved, attempting to ignore how horrible his stomach felt with each quiet step. In the distance, he could hear his name being called, but Yamaguchi didn’t lift his head to answer. He let the man holding him do the talking, seeming to explain the situation to someone they knew. The florist didn’t try to pry, the sudden darkness of his eyelids calling back his desire to sleep. The warmth of Tsukishima’s body and the steady heartbeat against his chest was comforting.

And before he could feel the cooler air outside the party, Yamaguchi was out.

~**~

“Your team are miracle workers.” Suga’s eyes pulled away from the blonde now carrying his favorite florist out of the venue to look at Daichi, the dark haired man’s face still holding a look of shock.

“I don’t understand what we did to deserve that title, but thank you.”

“In all the years I’ve known Tsukishima, I’ve never seen him take care of another person when intoxicated.” Clarifying his answer, Daichi swirled back to the bar, shaking his head. “He’s made it clear that those who drink too much and get sick are victims of circumstance.”

“I’m sure he’s not that bad.” Suga defended, though a blank look from the officer proved that the suggestion was rejected.

“One time I asked him to drive Tanaka home after a night of partying went way too far. It was Tanaka’s birthday, and everyone kept buying him drinks. Tsukishima made it a point to remind me of every type of legal accusation that could come out of having a drunk civilian in his possession. I remind you of my occupation because I did with him and our charismatic lawyer didn’t seem to care.” The dry story made Suga burst into giggles, sending a sympathetic look to his companion and patting his shoulder once despite his wide smile.
“Look at the bright side; if you ever do go rogue cop and kill one of your friends, you’ve got the best lawyer a guy could ask for.” Daichi rolled his eyes at Suga’s teasing before he finished his beer in response. “And you’re forgetting one thing about this situation.”

“What’s that?”

“Yamaguchi is a very hard person to say no to when he’s in his normal state. Nevermind when he’s helpless and drunk. He’s far too cute to simply leave to his own miserable devices.”

“Why do I have a feeling that could describe someone else I know?” At Daichi’s obvious jab, Suga played innocent, sipping at the last of his drink before responding.

“I have no idea what you’re talking about.”

“Yeah, I’ll pretend I believe that.” Warm eyes drifted away from Suga’s snickering to wave at the bartender, politely smiling at the man when he approached. “Can you grab us the bill? You can throw his drink on my tab.”

“What a lucky guy. Is it your boyfriend’s birthday?” The innocent question made Suga blink, the new word catching him off guard. Repeating the question in his head made his eyes widen and his cheeks rise in color, though it hardly compared to the response that came after Daichi’s reply.

“Both.” It wasn’t until the grinning bartender was turned away from the two that Daichi glanced back to Suga, his eyes showing his obvious hesitation despite his smile. “Uh, if that’s okay with you. I meant to ask earlier, but—”

“That’s the best birthday gift yet.” The truth in the words was palpable on Suga’s tongue, his smile genuine as he snagged Daichi’s hand in his own. The fingers were quick to intertwine, Suga laughing when Daichi yanked their joined hands up and kissed the top of his.

“Then happy birthday, Koushi.” Their moment of happiness was pleasant but far too short for the birthday boy’s liking.

“Seriously, why is it always me ruining these moments?” The smooth voice of Kuroo made Suga tilt his head away from Daichi, watching the cameraman scratch the back of his neck and sigh low. “Guess I should first say congrats to the happy couple.”
“Thanks,” Daichi answered, turning away from the man to finish paying the bill. Suga, however, became aware of the half-smile Kuroo was supporting, and immediately knew something was off.

“What’s going on?”

“Can’t say I really know, except Kenma is being used as a human tissue by the shrimp.” The words caught the officer’s attention quickly, Daichi turning to face Kuroo completely.

“Shouyou?”

“Yup.”

“And we have no clue what happened?” Suga asked, the two men already on their feet to follow Kuroo.

“From what I saw, it looked like he got into an argument with Kageyama. They were too far to really hear what the fight was about, but our baker looked ready to stuff the shrimp into an oven by the time he stormed out of the place. Then Hinata came running over to us and deposited himself onto Kenma’s lap, bawling. He won’t say a peep about what happened, so I figured it’d be better to get mom and dad to work your magical ways.”

“Shouyou tends to get really emotional when he drinks,” Daichi explained, letting out a slow sigh while rubbing his temple. “I should have kept a better eye on him.”

“It’s not your fault, we were all just having a good time,” Suga reassured, knowing the heavy responsibility Daichi put on his shoulders when it came to his friends. He couldn’t blame the man; he did the same with his own motley crew. The three finally reached their destination across the venue, the crying Hinata easy to pick out. Suga had to stifle his coo of joy when seeing Kenma. Despite his obvious discomfort, Kenma had allowed his friend to cry on his shirt, even putting an award pat on his friend’s shoulder. The large social gathering had already been a hurdle for Kenma’s anxiety, which was why the wedding planner had personally gone to him and reminded him that he was not mandated to go. But Kenma had simply shrugged at the offer of escape, mentioning that Kuroo would be there. The owner believed that was another reason for the cameraman’s refusal to drink; he wanted to be completely sober in order to keep track of Kenma’s social anxiety levels.
“Shouyou?” Daichi’s gentle tone had the sobbing man lifting his head, eyes puffy and lip trembling when seeing his friend in front of him. Suga watched the officer move to crouch in front of the couch the two were on, offering a trained smile of empathy. “You okay?”

“No, I-I…” sniffling, Hinata rubbed his hands over his eyes, his palms muffling his words as he spoke. “He ha-hates me.”

“Tobio?” Suga supplied, Hinata’s head bobbing twice in response. “I’m sure he doesn’t, Shouyou. Why would he hate you?”

“I ye-yelled at him and…and I…Oikawa told me…I’m sorry!” The words were jumbled from the alcohol and the emotions surging in the smaller man, Suga’s heart clenching in sympathy. A gentle sigh was heard from next to him as Daichi rose back to his feet, sending Suga an apologetic glance.

“I should probably bring him home; he’s not going to really make any sense until he’s sober and hungover tomorrow.”

“Do you need one of us to drive his car somewhere?” Kuroo asked though Daichi shook his head as he helped Hinata up to his feet. Suga noticed the look of concern that flashed over Kenma’s face as he watched Hinata wobble, though the editor stayed silent during the conversation.

“The two grooms drove here together, and Noya’s got Hinata’s keys.”

“You sure the little man’s able to drive? He’s been pretty amped all night.” Daichi laughed at Kuroo’s grin, nodding while wrapping an arm around Hinata’s shoulders.

“He told me an hour ago he started letting Tanaka take his shots halfway through their pool game. He just gets really energized in venues like this. I think he realized how drunk our birthday boy was getting and put a plan in place in case this happened. Our three amigos have learned first hand what happens when I find out one of them has driven under the influence.” Daichi’s explanation made Suga feel at ease over the driving situation, the wedding planner giving a side glance to Kuroo.

“Maybe we should call it a night, too. It’s getting pretty late.”

“I’ll rally the troops.” Kuroo’s grin was wide as he snatched Kenma’s hand in his own, pulling the
less eager man along for the mission. Suga smiled at the sight before looking back to Daichi, who already had his eyes on the planner.

“You should probably go find Noya.”

“Yeah, you’re right. I’m sorry about this.”

“Don’t be; I’m glad we came out. It was fun, and I got a nifty birthday present out of it.” When seeing the obvious confusion on Daichi’s face, Suga stepped forward, placing a kiss on the officer’s cheek. From there, he let his words graze the skin under his lips. “I’ll expect a text from my boyfriend when he gets home.”

“Right.” Suga watched Daichi cough to cover his obvious embarrassment, the officer steadying his grip on the useless Hinata before speaking again. “I’ll do that.”

“Goodnight, you two.” Suga watched Daichi lead Hinata away from the area, his cheeks hurting from the result of the night. Suga had not only been able to share his birthday with friends new and old, but he had established his relationship with Daichi along the way. The giddy feeling now bubbling in his stomach was refreshing to him. Despite his concern over Oikawa’s plan, the party seemed to have been a good choice. The tailor had been right, after all.

But he would rather die than ever tell his assistant that.

Chapter End Notes

And the party of the century is finally over. Lots of fun, confusion, and tense moments to be discussed. What will happen on Iwaizumi and Oikawa’s date? What happened between Kageyama and Hinata? What will happen with Suga and Daichi now that they’re an official couple? And will Yamaguchi ever answer Tsukishima’s question? Or will something get in the way? Comment and kudos are always loved, and go read my newly completed story, "The Trouble With Soulmates" while you wait for your next chapter. Until then!

Next Chapter: Confrontational Confessions
Hey everyone, hope everyone is having a good holiday weekend!

Normally this would be my week to update this story, but because of Thanksgiving, I spent more time with my family and friends as well as caught up on my grad work.

That meant I had to take some time I would normally use for writing. I hope that you all can understand the circumstance and be patient for the next chapter. It will be up for next Saturday, and then every other week chapters will resume again.

Again, I am thankful that all of you are reading my story, and I hope that this doesn't ruin your reading experience. >.<

Sincerely,

Navybluewings
Chapter Notes

Thank you, everyone, who was so patient with me in the last week about this chapter! I had a wonderful holiday, and I hope that some of you did as well (since not all of you are from the US). So please enjoy the chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

To say that Yamaguchi was mortified would be the understatement of the year. Despite the florist managing to escape a hangover from the night before (a feat he was still considering a blessing he didn’t deserve), the brunet was tempted to call out of work. He was unsure if he could face his co-workers after his less than secretive drunk fest at the birthday party. Not only had he allowed Hinata to get him drunk, but the freckled florist wasn’t even able to walk himself out of the establishment. His memory was spotty at best, and he didn’t have the slightest idea how he managed to get into his own bed from the party venue.

Except that wasn’t entirely true. The part of his brain that he wished he could shut off continued to play out specific scenes from the night before like a bad rom-com movie. He tried to ignore the drunken snippets by creating new bouquet designs and tours of his greenhouse to potential guests. He had planned a busy schedule for the morning, hoping it would convince him to stay sober at the party. But even with the multiple people coming in and out of his workspace, Yamaguchi’s mind continued to wander. Moments like knocking shots back with one of the birthday boys or possibly claiming he marked someone like an animal were embarrassing but bearable. If he was lucky, Hinata’s state of intoxication would mean he would forget about all of their conversations anyways.

It was when he thought about straddling Tsukishima in the karaoke room and almost spilling his guts that made his face flame with horror. Drunk or not, Yamaguchi was sure he was fortunate to have kept his head after the incident. The lawyer was not known for enjoying other people touching him. Add that to the florist’s sloppy attempts at a conversation and his lack of stomach control, Yamaguchi was sure he shouldn’t be alive. He had seen the blonde glare holes into people who simply came into his personal space. One of Tsukishima’s main problems with Kuroo was the fact that the photographer continued to touch and tease him. By the compiling information stored in Yamaguchi’s brain, he was sure that the taller man would have left him to die on the couch in the room with little care.
And yet he didn’t. Now in a sober state, Yamaguchi was more than stunned by the other man’s actions. Instead of depositing him into Suga’s care or simply ditching him, Tsukishima had taken care of him. The bits of memories that the florist had regarding the end of the night were small but impactful. The smell of Tsukishima’s leather seats and the cooler wind spreading across his face blurred into sounds of giggling and the lawyer asking him the whereabouts of his apartment keys. The creak of the floorboard in his kitchen sounded far away from the bed he had been lying in. Instructions to ‘chew slower’ were muffled by the rushing of blood in Yamaguchi’s ears, though he was cognizant enough to swallow whatever was in his mouth. A cool hand that pressed on his cheek made the florist sigh in relief, the comforting sensation being the last thing he remembered before drowning in sleep.

Tsukki: I’ll stop by at lunch to talk about your dismal state.

The note left on Yamaguchi’s nightstand was formal and to the point, yet it still made the brunet’s heart flutter. The man with the wicked tongue was not known for compassion. A trip to the florist’s job in the middle of the workday would be an inconvenience for the lawyer. And Tsukishima was known for being time-savvy; a phone call to Suga would have given him the same information as a trip to the venue. Despite no indication in the simple sentence, the freckled man felt his smile wobble with excitement. Was it possible that Tsukishima was coming by simply because he wanted to see him? Would he want to continue the conversation that the drunken florist had started the night before? His mind also couldn’t help wandering into the darker parts of his insecurity. What if he was coming by to break off whatever friendship they were in the process of building? Was there a chance that Tsukishima had never intended for their relationship to step past the bet the two had going on? Would he call off the bet to show that Yamaguchi’s feelings weren’t reciprocated?

It was questions like these that made it impossible for Yamaguchi to keep focused on his job throughout the first part of the day.

“Are you going to be okay for the wedding tonight?” Yamaguchi blinked once to focus his eyes, which were dazed as they stared at the wall of his workshop. Quick to dart to his boss in the doorway, the brunet gave a hurried nod to try and prove he was fine.

“Yes, of course!”

“If you need to take a nap before the guests arrive, I can arrange that. Most of your work has already been completed for the wedding; nothing that Tooru and I couldn’t help fix if problems arose.” The sympathetic tone of Suga’s voice made the younger man bite his lip, the warm feelings from earlier being doused by guilt.

“I’m sorry that I got so out of hand last night-”
“It was nice to see you enjoy yourself,” Suga interrupted, his smile genuine as he placed a comforting hand on Yamaguchi’s shoulder. “You work very hard, and last night was meant for everyone to relax and have a good time. I’m only asking because you seem to be less focused than normal today.”

“That’s...thank you.” Yamaguchi sighed in relief over his boss’s comforting words, stiff shoulders slowly dropping from the tension they previously held. “I feel fine, I’m just...Tsukki and I spoke last night and I did some things I’m not exactly proud of. I just don’t want him to think I’m weird or maybe even dislike me now.”

“That’s a reasonable thing to be worried about,” Suga assured, Yamaguchi letting the older man guide him to a stool in the workplace. Once he was sitting, the brunet looked up at his boss again, confused by the wide smile and optimistic tone he used. “But I think that whatever transpired last night is not as detrimental as you may be thinking.”

“How can you be so sure?”

“Well, I guess I can’t give you a guaranteed answer; I’m a wedding planner, not a psychic after all.” There was humor in the fair-haired man’s tone as he stepped in front of Yamaguchi, warm hands falling onto the florist’s shoulders. “But it does give me some pretty cool superpowers when it comes to reading people. Hunches, if you like that word better. Would like to hear one of them?”

“Yes, Sugawara-san.” He was unsure what his boss was going to say, but Yamaguchi felt safe in knowing that Suga never engaged in conversations with others with the intent to harm. Kuroo and Oikawa were known for teasing and poking fun at anyone who came across their paths. Kageyama was far too blunt to be considered passionate at times, and Kenma avoided a serious conversation like the plague. Suga was like Yamaguchi in the sense that he tried to make everyone’s life brighter one day at a time. It was little moments, not grandiose gestures, that truly helped a person feel better about their current situations in life.

“Since I’ve known this motley crew, Tsukishima has made one point very clear; he does not want to be anywhere near Hinata, Tanaka, or Noya if he has to. Having any combination of these three is his kryptonite, and he takes any chance he can get to remove himself from their presence. I can only imagine that including alcohol into this simple equation would only enhance his desire to keep distance from them. Would you agree?”

“I-I don’t think he means to get annoyed by them!” Yamaguchi supplied instantly, his fingers nervously dancing in his lap while he continued. “They’re just...they’re different types of people.”
“Yes, very true. Which is why I found it interesting that whenever I looked for Tsukishima, he seemed to be in direct contact with the three amigos last night. The venue was quite large, and each of us had spread out in different groups throughout the place. But Tsukishima chose to stay with the three men who bothered him the most. And do you know the hunch I get as to why that was?”

“I...I don’t know,” Yamaguchi admitted, watching Suga’s smile soften at the same time as his voice.

“Because you were with them.” The statement widened the brown eyes of the florist, who stared in confusion at his boss. “Tsukishima wanted to spend time with you, even if it meant dealing with three people who consistently get under his skin. I think that implies that you mean a lot more to him that he may want to say. And unless the words you said to him last night were inappropriate or demeaning, I don’t think he’s quite ready to walk away from your connection.”

“That’s…” But the words that Yamaguchi wanted to use to discredit Suga’s observation died before they could form on his lips. The small, optimistic part of his heart rose in protest to the front of his mind. Why couldn’t Tsukishima want to spend time with him? Hadn’t the lawyer already proven that he enjoyed his company throughout the months they had known each other? If Yamaguchi could ignore his self-doubt and modesty, the thought that he was an attractive man wasn’t so absurd. He had been flirted with before, and his parents weren’t the only people that complimented on his appearance. He knew he wasn’t comparable to Suga or Oikawa, but their beauty was different than his own appeal. Yamaguchi was the Callirhoe involucrata in his garden of friends; a simple beauty, yet unique enough to linger along the edges of the mind.

“Hello?” A quiet voice wafted into the workshop from the adjacent greenhouse, Yamaguchi and Suga both shifting their glances to one another in mirrored confusion.

“Did you schedule a walk-through during lunch?” At Suga’s question, Yamaguchi shook his head, quickly gathering his notepad as he walked into the greenhouse.

“Not that I remember.” And as soon as he saw the owner of the voice, the brunet knew he had never seen her before. There, amongst the beautiful floral, stood a woman that Yamaguchi could only describe as stunning. With a soft complexion and a dainty frame, the dark hair of the newcomer tickled the edges of her exposed shoulders. Smokey eyes were protected by a fragile pair of glasses, the woman’s black sweater paired with a white pencil skirt. Despite having a particular interest in men, the florist felt his face warm when realizing his eyes followed the lean legs to the ballet flats now stepping on the dirt of the greenhouse floor. Quickly he turned his attention back to her face, the woman’s attention resting on the row of Amaryllis flowers to her left.
“Good afternoon.” Hearing Suga’s calm voice behind him shouldn’t have made Yamaguchi jump as high as he did, the man nearly knocking over the potted plant by his side from his movements. The woman’s eyes were slow to rise to the two men, though they were filled with polite intentions as she placed her hands in front of her and bowed.

“I’m sorry for the interruption, but Kuroo-san redirected me to this location when I asked to speak with the owner of the venue.” Her voice matched perfectly with her calm demeanor, the woman raising her head to give a small smile before brushing some of her hair behind her ear.

“That would be me; I’m Sugawara Koushi, though Suga is fine.” Yamaguchi trailed behind Suga as the man moved forwards, shaking hands with the woman who nodded once. “And this is the florist of the venue; Yamaguchi Tadashi.”

“A pleasure to m-meet you.” His voice squeaked toward the end of the sentence, the freckled man feeling mortified with his sudden lack of baritone. The woman’s smile proved she had noticed the pitch change, but she was kind enough not to bring it up.

“I’m Kiyoko Shimizu.” The grey eyes quietly glanced around the greenhouse again, her lips quirking in a comforting smile when her focus returned to the red flower from before. “This is a beautiful greenhouse.”

“Thank you!” It was a statement he heard often from his customers, but he still took pride each time he was given the compliment. These flowers were his livelihood, and it was nice to see his passion recognized.

“We are quite proud of Yamaguchi’s work; he’s a wonderful addition to our family at Little Crows. Now, Kiyoko-san,” Suga’s smile was well rehearsed as he addressed the woman, keeping his voice a blend of warm and professional. “I’m afraid I don’t remember setting up an appointment for this timeframe. Have we spoken over the phone before?”

“No, we haven’t.” Another bow from the woman showed her apology before she continued. “But I’m not here to request a tour. I was asked to come here by my future mother-in-law; she had recently received a set of flowers from her son, and she enjoyed the selection of flowers. The paper the flowers were prepared in had this location’s address. I was asked to come by to request another arrangement to be done.”

“They weren’t from a wedding?” The shake of the woman’s head drew Yamaguchi’s eyebrows together in confusion. It was rare that the florist made arrangements for people outside of the wedding party, as his attention was already stretched thin with the ceremonies. He had been known
for re-making wedding bouquets for husbands to surprise their wives with on anniversaries or valentine’s days, but he hadn’t done either of those things for months. In all honesty, he couldn’t remember the last time he had a client outside of a wedding party. No matter how many times he racked his brain over the information and separate appointments in the past year, nothing stood out to him. “I’m really sorry, but I don’t remember the arrangement you’re talking about.”

“Yamaguchi goes through a lot of customers, so it’s quite taxing for him to select a particular design without some context,” Suga supplied, showing his appreciation for Yamaguchi’s work with a pat on his shoulder.

“Would a photograph help?”

“Yes, that would be great!” Yamaguchi smiled at the woman’s helpful offer, silently thanking the customer for her idea. Despite the copious amounts of arrangements that Yamaguchi made, he took the time to photograph and log each one into a scrapbook he kept in his warehouse. Even if he couldn’t remember the customer by the picture, seeing the flowers in the arrangement would help him re-create a similar creation. He did have some time before his next appointment came in, despite the lingering reminder that he had reserved this space for a particular lawyer’s appearance.

Then again, maybe a little bit of distraction would help Yamaguchi face the inevitable conversation from the night before.

“I hope this will help.” Kiyoko’s hand slipped into the pocket of her skirt, stepping forwards to hand over the picture. Yamaguchi nodded his appreciation before he flipped the small photo in his hand, his eyes instantly picking up on the bright colors of the orange butterfly weed. The moment of awe from seeing the vibrant color was quickly doused with skepticism as he saw the yellow carnations speckled in the arrangement. Why had he put such negative flowers together? Even if he had made the design as a last minute order, he was unlikely to have put the two plants together without some hesitation. The last flower, a funnel petunia, made his stomach flip in guilt. This wasn’t an arrangement he wanted to make again. Even if it was beautiful, and the colors blended together seamlessly, the connotation of the floral display was-

*I need a bouquet that says ‘fuck you’.*

And suddenly, the memory of the distasteful design popped into his head. Eyes widening at the shock, Yamaguchi forced himself to breathe as he stared down at the picture, his stomach cramping and his heart racing. The woman had said that this was a design for her mother-in-law. In their exchanges with the man of his memory, there had been mention of a sibling. A brother, older, who had been married. But Kiyoko hadn’t said the woman was her current mother-in-law. The words were clear in presenting the title as a future endeavor. Trying to keep himself from jumping to the only conclusion he could think of, Yamaguchi raised his eyes, hoping his voice didn’t shake as he spoke.
“Is your fiance...Tsukishima Kei?” His question made a flicker of recognition appear in the woman’s eyes, and Yamaguchi felt his stomach drop out when she spoke.

“Oh, you remember him.” The air felt like shards of glass in his lungs as he struggled to think of words to reply with. Pain was blocking any useful forms of language, and Kiyoko’s soft voice barely reached his ears as she filled the silence. “Yamaguchi-san?”

“Tadashi.” It was Suga who spoke next, his hand resting on his back as he looked at the florist in concern. Yamaguchi was sure that Suga understood the change in his composure over the news. Tsukishima was getting married? When had this come about, and why hadn’t Yamaguchi known? His eyes clenched tight as he pressed down the rush of emotions he was feeling, letting out a shaky breath before pushing himself to look at the confused woman in front of him.

“I-I’m out of some of these flowers.” It was a blatant lie, the brunet knowing the exact location of each of the floral species in the large greenhouse. Still, he pressed forward in the conversation, hoping his smile would hide his desire to run away from the woman who had inadvertently stabbed his heart. “But I can construct another one similar if you think your...m-mother-in-law would enjoy that.”

“I’d have to ask her, first; I’m not comfortable making this decision without her approval.” Despite the woman’s kind tone, the words lacked connection to the woman she was speaking about as Kiyoko pulled her phone out of her pocket. “May I step outside? I’ll try to contact her.”

“Of course, take your time,” Suga answered for Yamaguchi, seeming to pick up on the tremble now running through the younger man’s body. Both men kept their composure as Kiyoko left the area, the florist’s legs almost dropping him once the beautiful woman was gone. The freckled man grasped the side of the table to keep himself standing, leaning his arm onto the cold metal to ground him to reality. “Yamaguchi, are you okay?”

“Fiance. She’s his—oh my god, Suga-san.” Tears rushed to the sides of his eyes as he choked back a sob, Yamaguchi grasping the front of his shirt. The pain that spread through his chest felt like a virus. It was like someone had sucker punched him square in the gut. Even as he tried to calm himself down, the spikes of disbelief and pain continued to pierce his heart.

“Would you like me to tell her you can’t do the arrangement? I could say you need time to set up an appointment—” But Suga’s suggestion made Yamaguchi shake his head before the wedding planner could finish the sentence.
“I’m going to do it. Just because he...Kiyoko-san shouldn’t have to leave empty-handed because of me.” When he lifted his head to glance at Suga, he made sure his gaze was tear-free, giving a weak smile he barely felt. “I’ll be okay, Suga-san. You don’t have to stay; I know you’re busy with the wedding preparations.”

“Wedding preparations are not nearly as important as you, Tadashi.” And he knew that Suga meant that. The small warmth that sprouted in his heart at Suga’s confession made Yamaguchi lift to his feet, giving a gentle wave of his hand to dismiss the statement.

“Really, I’m okay. I want to do this.” And truly, he did. Even though his personal life was starting to fall apart at the seams, the fact that the woman had enjoyed his arrangement meant something to his professional life. He didn’t want to ruin his reputation by denying a customer for no legitimate reason. Work life and personal life had to be kept separate. And though he still had some negative feelings toward the matriarch of the Tsukishima family, she was a paying customer.

“Yamaguchi-san?” The soothing voice of Kiyoko returned to the greenhouse, the beautiful woman slipping her phone back into her pocket as she approached the two men. “She trusts in your ability and has permitted amendments to her purchase.”

“That’s great to hear.” Smiling weakly, Yamaguchi sent a glance to Suga before continuing. “Do you mind if I complete this order before my next appointment?”

“You know I’ll support you in whatever you decide to do.” The words had a double meaning for the florist, Suga seeming to take a moment to study the freckled face before turning to Kiyoko. “I apologize for having to leave now, but a bride and her three bridal ‘poodles’ are planned to arrive in the next fifteen minutes.”

“Of course.” The polite exchanges of goodbyes were spoken behind Yamaguchi, who already started to collect the flowers for his new arrangement. The red asters now filling his hands reflected a symbol of love and patience, a personal favorite if Yamaguchi thought about it for too long. Despite wanting to keep his personal feelings out of the floral design, he knew while running his fingers over the soft petals of the yellow daffodils that his mind couldn’t stay objective. He collected a few of the cheerful flowers in his hands, pausing on the lone daffodil now left in the patch. While a bundle signified good omens, a daffodil alone had always been a symbol of misfortune for the owner. The sentiment felt ironic, in a way.

“How long have you known Tsukki?” His question was out of his mouth before he could stop
himself, Yamaguchi swallowing quickly before turning his eyes back to the woman silently watching him.

“Tsukki?”

“Oh, ah...I me-meant Tsukishima-san,” Yamaguchi amended, feeling foolish for using the man’s nickname. Quietly he wondered if the lawyer had spent any time speaking of their friendship to the woman he was going to marry, a thought he highly doubted.

“I’ve known the Tsukishima family for a few years though I’ve only known Tsukishima-san since January,” She answered quietly, her face reflecting little emotion about the topic. “His mother and my father are close acquaintances because of their businesses.”

“Oh, that’s good.” The words felt weird coming from his mouth, as the thoughts that went through his mind were contradictory. His hands twitched in protest, the florist distracting himself as he skimmed through the pink Freesia collection he had. Innocent and dainty like the woman who was now keeping the freckled man company in the greenhouse. Guilt swelled in his chest when a flashback of the night before ran through his mind, Yamaguchi’s voice quick to repress the memory. “I don’t mean to intrude, I just...I enjoy hearing the stories of people in love. It comes with the territory of my job, I suppose.”

“True love is...a beautiful thing.” The words were spoken with the curve of longing that rarely decorated the voice of a woman preparing for a wedding. It made Yamaguchi pause in his actions, fingers tightening on the stems of his bouquet as he looked back at Kiyoko. The woman’s face was passive at first glance, but the lingering stare that was directed outside of the greenhouse was compact with heavy emotions. It was hard to think that a woman as stunning as herself would ever have a look of loneliness in her eyes. Yamaguchi’s heart squeezed again, but it wasn’t for himself. A sliver of sympathy leaked into the bruised organ, though he wasn’t sure why he felt that way. Why did Kiyoko look so lonesome? She was engaged to Tsukishima, after all, a man who was intelligent and handsome. His sharp tongue was a facade for his softer compassion, and the witty humor and came from him when his defenses were lowered was always making Yamaguchi smile. He was hard-working and despite his busy schedule, the man made time to send stupid texts to the florist at some point in the day. Tsukishima was amazing. Tsukishima was everything Yamaguchi dreamed of. Tsukishima was-

“Yamaguchi.” there. Yamaguchi nearly dropped the flowers in his hands as he froze, his head jerking to the entrance of the greenhouse to see the lawyer standing in the doorway. Tsukishima’s normally composed face was cracked, his eyes quick to dart between Kiyoko and Yamaguchi while he assessed the situation with a scowl. The woman took her time to look over at Tsukishima, and Yamaguchi noticed her mask of stoic etiquette returned as she bowed.
“Tsukishima-san.”

“Kiyoko-san. What are you doing here?” The formality that he used when addressing his fiance uncomfortable to Yamaguchi, but hearing him confirm knowing the woman had his throat burning with unshed tears. He took the moment of distraction between the lawyer and the woman in order to grab a random filler flower, not bothering to look at his choice to complete the bouquet.

“I—I’ll go wrap these up while you two kiss—I mean talk!” Escaping into the back of the greenhouse, Yamaguchi sprinted over to the workshop desk to finish his arrangement for Kiyoko. The sooner that he got the flowers cleaned up and organized, the faster he could get himself out of this horrible web he had been spun into. He tried to ignore the shaking of his fingers as he chopped the ends of the flowers, forcing the shaking hands to shove a piece of wrapping paper under the arrangement. He was folding the ends of the paper when a shadow dropped over his workspace.

“We need to talk.” The tone of Tsukishima’s voice didn’t ask for a rebuttal, but Yamaguchi couldn’t keep his mouth shut as he quickly shook his head.

“I am really busy right now, Tsuki. I have to give this to your fiance for your mother since she seemed to enjoy my previous work. Funny, isn’t it? I found it funny!” The forced laugh that came after the statement only weakened his attempt at sounding genuine in their conversation.

“Kiyoko and I—"

“Are a really beautiful couple.” Yamaguchi felt his voice shake over the words, his head lowering to hide his emotions. Though the sadness was clawing at his heart, he didn’t want to let Tsukishima see it. His hands slapped a piece of tape over the edge of the paper before he moved around the table, hands clutching the arrangement like a lifeline as he left the workspace. The greenhouse, to his surprise, was empty, no sight of Kiyoko to be found.

“I sent her back so we could talk.” Yamaguchi closed his eyes when Tsukishima emerged from the workshop, letting his deep voice carry in the spacious greenhouse. “I told her I would deliver the flowers to my mother.”

“Then you should take these and leave.” The snort that Tsukishima gave in response to Yamaguchi’s suggestion made the florist turn to face him, shock filling him when seeing the causal roll of Tsukishima’s eyes.
“Depends; do you plan to have an actual conversation with me?”

“Wh-what?”

“Otherwise, I don’t see the reward for being an errand boy for my mother.”

“You…” Never, in the years that Yamaguchi had been a florist, had the man used his creation as a weapon before. But the instant reaction to the pain and anger than flashed in Yamaguchi’s heart made it easy to swing the flowers into the other’s face, leaving the greenhouse silent for a few seconds.

“Did you just hit me with flowers?” The freckled man took the lawyer’s moment of shock to smack him again, eyes closed and teeth clenched in anger.

“You-!” The third hit sent petals and leaves flying around them, the brunet winding up to hit his companion for a fourth time before his wrist was captured in a large hand. Yamaguchi fought the hand that now held him back, barely able to resist the tears that were pooling in his eyes and throat.

“Yamaguchi-”

“We’re not pawns in your court case!” Lifting his head to glare through his tears, Yamaguchi used his free hand to snatch the front of Tsukishima’s shirt, pulling him closer as he raised his voice. “You can’t just lie to Kiyoko and then try to threaten me into talking to you. I’m not your client or a witness. I have feelings, feelings I thought you shared before I found out you were getting married to a beautiful woman. And Kiyoko do-doesn’t deserve this! She seems so sweet and kind and lonely. She doesn’t deserve to be lonely! And you-”

“I’m **not** marrying her.” It was the conviction, not the words, that Tsukishima used that made Yamaguchi pause, the blonde gave a stare that clearly meant for the florist to remain silent as he continued. “The reason I was late in meeting you today was that I was coming from my mother’s office, and not my own. I’m assuming my mother sent Kiyoko-san here before our conversation regarding our engagement.”

“Why would you have that conversation with your mother?” the raised eyebrow that Tsukishima gave him made Yamaguchi shut his lips, wondering where the previous courage he had exploded with had run off to. Once sure that he wouldn’t be interrupted again, the lawyer sighed and used his free hand to rub his temple.
“In January, my mother had a meeting with Kiyoko-san’s father regarding the marriage between myself and his daughter. This was against my own wishes since I’ve quite clearly taken the time to express my appreciation of the male anatomy to my mother. As I’ve stated earlier, I’m less of a son and more of an asset to my mother. A pawn, as someone once said.” The pause between sentences was intentional, as Yamaguchi felt his face flush at the reminder of what he had previously shouted. “Kiyoko-san is in no position to terminate the proposal, as she is more reliant on her father than I am of my mother. Even if she opposed the wedding, she wouldn’t say it, and dutifully represented her family to the best of her abilities. She is a very intellectual and kind woman whom I have nothing but respect for. I have never had the intention of hurting her in this process.

“I had been opposed to the marriage, but not enough to formally go up against my mother. I’ve been single for some time, and my job and no acceptable candidates to date has left my desire to go further than verbally opposing the engagement lacking. There had been little to no conversation of an actual wedding, and it seemed that both sides were content with years passing before anything legal happened. But…recently, I’ve found something that had caused me to reevaluate the status of my engagement to Kiyoko.”

“Something?” Yamaguchi parroted, Tsukishima letting his eyes casually slip down to the wrist that was still held in his grasp.

“Amendment; someone.” A swipe of the lawyer’s thumb over his pulse point made Yamaguchi realize that it was beating far faster than before, goosebumps flooding his skin from the gentle caress. Wide brown eyes were glued to the face of the quiet lawyer, breath hitching when slender lips parted to speak again. “Last night, I made a discovery about said person. One, he’s a terrible lush.”

“T-Tsukki!”

“Second,” Tsukishima continued, golden eyes glancing down at the flushing man standing in front of him. “is that even when he is stupidly drunk and he’s managed to crawl into my lap to make a fool of himself, I find him interesting. So much so, that I allowed said man to drool over my leather seats, shout obscenities loud enough to alarm his neighbors, and demand I make him a grilled cheese sandwich which would, and I quote, ‘make Mona Lisa moan’ before passing out two seconds after eating it.”

“Oh my god,” Yamaguchi muttered, trying to cover his face with his hand. Tsukishima was quick to take this option away by grabbing it, making the flushed man face his piercing gaze before he responded.
“Closing argument. You are not a pawn, a toy, or a game I intend to use to curb my boredom. I understand the difference between a prize I want to play with and someone I’m interested in making orgasmic grilled cheese sandwiches for.” The words were a direct hit to Yamaguchi’s heart, the freckled man sure that his face would burn off from how embarrassed he was. The lift of a smirk on Tsukishima’s face meant he recognized the look, his words tinted with smug undertones as he pressed forward with his explanation. “I called Kiyoko-san’s father this morning in order to meet and officially retract the marriage proposal. Conversations were had, but he ultimately agreed with my standpoint and accepted the nullification of our arrangement. Afterwards, I met with my mother, who was less understanding of the circumstances. But regardless of her approval, my verdict has been made. A decision I planned to speak to you about today until I was assaulted with floral foliage.”

“T-this isn’t my fault!” Yamaguchi protested instantly, his eyes moving over to the destroyed arrangement in his hand. It was a dismal version of the arrangement he had started with, and the florist inside of him internally cried over the loss of the precious flowers. Returning his attention back to Tsukishima, Yamaguchi let out a weak huff and stepped into the man’s personal space. “But...I guess I’m not as mad about the situation as before.”

“You guess?”

“You could have told me earlier that you were engaged.”

“It seems we both have things we could have admitted sooner rather than later.” The implication was heavy in Tsukishima’s voice, and Yamaguchi knew the hint was aimed at the semi-confession from the night before. Too deep in the pit of embarrassment to deal with another hit against his ego, Yamaguchi quickly pulled his hand out of Tsukishima’s, using it to ruffle his hair nervously. He blinked at the rough feeling of something in his hair, the brunet slowly pulling a piece of one of the stems out. Glancing up at the man in front of him, Yamaguchi let out a laugh, earning him a look of skepticism from the lawyer.

“Hold still, you’ve got something stuck up here.”

“From your flower barrage?” Ignoring the blonde’s sarcastic question, Yamaguchi leaned up and plucked the mystery plant from the man’s hair. Slowly dropping back down to his feet Yamaguchi was surprised to see it wasn’t a flower, but a cluster of white berries. Analyzing the mystery berry, it took a moment for Yamaguchi to remember his last-minute dash grab when making the bouquet, connecting the cluster of greenery and berries to its associated name.

“Mistletoe.”
“Mistletoe?”

“Yeah, I must have put it in your mother’s bouquet before I used it as a battering ram,” Yamaguchi explained, laughing as he wiggled the innocent plant between the two of them. “I normally use it for Christmas weddings, to add some ambiance, but I keep it year round as an offset to super vibrant bouquets. It’s sort of like fluff for an arrangement that needs a subdued color.”

“Hmm.” The noise gave no hints to Tsukishima’s next movements, the lawyer yanking the florist forward with enough force to offset his balance. Yamaguchi ended up with his chest pressed into the taller man’s, brown eyes glancing up at the other with confusion. The hand that had a steady grip on the Christmas berry was now held higher between them, the words of the lawyer spoken while he dipped his head. “Don’t need to know the meaning of this plant.”

“Tsukki-!” The press of confident lips against his own was surprising to the man now being kissed, Yamaguchi’s stomach flipping in excitement and warmth from the touch. His hand easily dropped the warped arrangement of flowers, leaving it open for the lawyer to guide onto his chest. Their mouths melted together like warm chocolate, Yamaguchi’s neck craning forward to taste more of the man who continued to frustrate and intrigue him. Tsukishima quietly led the kiss with confidence and experience, tickling the edge of Yamaguchi’s lip with the tip of his tongue. The warm palm slipping under the florist’s shirt to press into the balmy skin of his hip had Yamaguchi gasping, torn between pressing closer to the hand or the chest of the man now deepening their kiss. His body buzzed with hormones as he tried to respond to the kiss, his knees warning of losing strength by the slight quiver in them. Ignoring the feeling, Yamaguchi’s arm looped behind the taller man’s neck, toes twitching in his shoes when their tongues brushed in passing. The shock that weaved through his spine was exciting, and Yamaguchi chased the feeling by instinctively sucking on the tongue now exploring his mouth.

The gentle tease made the kiss break apart, Yamaguchi panting fast enough to momentarily fog the glasses of the man standing in front of him. The mist was quick to disperse, though the heat in the golden stare behind the lenses set Yamaguchi’s skin on fire. The natural chemistry that had erupted between their lips in the kiss felt surreal to the virgin, and he realized with mortification that his body was quite aware of their tension. Shyly he stepped away from the chest he was pressed against, hoping the slight clenching of his thighs wouldn’t be noticed by the man now rubbing the bottom of his spine smoothly.

“I assume that I know the answer to this, but I’ll ask anyway. Was that okay?”

“Yes,” Yamaguchi breathed out, watching Tsukishima give him a quick moment to catch his breath before speaking again.

“As much as I’d like to continue this, I’ve got work to catch up on at the office.”
“O-Oh! Right, I understand.” The fact that he was at work and was supposed to be preparing for a wedding that night had completely escaped his mind, though he wasn’t ready to admit that to the other man. Tsukishima took his time separating from the florist, Yamaguchi watching the lawyer check his watch before walking toward the exit of the greenhouse. He only paused at the end, sighing once before turning back to face the confused brunet.

“I’ve got a formal dinner I’m supposed to attend next week. Since my engagement is now over, I’m without a date. Are you interested in going?”

“You’re asking me on a date.” Despite the previous implication, Yamaguchi wasn’t taking the chance to misinterpret the situation again. Tsukishima gave a casual nod at the statement, Yamaguchi not hesitating to nod. “Yes!”

“Don’t sound too excited, it’s a boring event most years.” An obvious once over of Yamaguchi’s body had the man flushing again, Tsukishima’s eyes hinting a mischievous thought as he shrugged. “But I have a feeling this time might be different.”

“You’re the worst,” Yamaguchi groaned, ignoring Tsukishima’s snort as he watched the man give a casual wave before leaving. Yamaguchi let his eyes glance down at the floor of the greenhouse, eyes lingering on the broken flowers scattered on the dirt. The two had made it through another turbulent situation with little damage, a step up from their previous fight.

Yamaguchi could only hope the daffodils staring up at him continued to be the good omen they were meant to be.

Chapter End Notes

A chapter full of TsukkiYama? Totally wasn't planned that way, but the plot took way longer for this part than I expected. Hope that you guys don't mind! Anyways, what will happen with these two at the dinner? Will Kageyama and Hinata figure out their problems before Hinata's birthday? And how does Kuroo feel about his current predicament with Kenma after the party? Find out all of this and more in the next chapter! Kudos, comments, and lots of love!

Next Chapter: The Truth is in the Batter
Chapter Summary

Kuroo learns something new about Kenma, and Kageyama takes some sweet advice.

Chapter Notes

Hello all! Hope that your weekend is going well. With the holiday season upon us, I almost forgot to post this! >.< But here it is, so enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“And another beautiful wedding to write home about.” Kuroo’s pleased smile stretched lazily over his face as he casually rotated his shoulder, the darkness of the night just starting to streak across the sky while he walked toward his apartment.

In the cameraman’s opinion, the weddings with lots of pizzazz were his favorite, and the one he had just finished working was no exception. The ‘superhero’ theme for the two comic artists felt appropriate instead of gaudy. The wedding party was more than willing to go along with the theme, each wearing an iconic outfit from the Marvel universe while walking down the aisle. Though the groom and bride’s outfits were more traditional, their accessories weren’t. Kuroo snapped the six pieces of jewelry (two earrings, a necklace, two bracelets, and a pendant on her waist ribbon) that signified the ‘infinity stones’, pairing with the gauntlet that her fiance wore during the ceremony. Her vows were unique as well. The bride popped the gems off of their mounted piece of gold to explain how each represented something she would share in their marriage. The finishing touch was when she placed the symbolic stones over the knuckles of the gauntlet, emphasizing her trust in the man standing in front of her. It was a beautiful moment for the cameraman to capture, and he knew he wouldn’t forget it.

The rest of the night was filled with funny moments (like the dance-off between Team Captain America and Team Iron Man), heartfelt moments and a love that Kuroo knew would last the stretch of time. He liked to believe that all of the people who got married in their establishment stayed happy together, reminiscing about their love in photographs that he captured. But some couples, like the one he had the honor of capturing tonight, weren’t simply hopes. Their love was strong, and even when they thought nobody in the world was watching, their eyes shined with adoration for the person holding their hand. It was a feeling that Kuroo knew everyone strived for, and only a few got to grasp.

Kuroo didn’t understand how he had been lucky enough to find the one who fixed that eternal itch for him. Just thinking of the small blond who had been able to sneak out before being roped into
cleaning made the messy haired man smile. Kenma was someone that made everything seem right in the world. He was quiet and complicated, but Kuroo loved him for it. Each twisty road that he walked down when exploring Kenma’s personality only revealed another beautiful piece of the editor’s soul, even if he didn’t see it in himself. Being best friends with him for so long allowed Kuroo access to sides of Kenma that nobody else had ever seen. Their bond had always been special. When realizing that he had fallen in love with his best friend his senior year, it didn’t scare him at all. Because who wouldn’t want to be in love with someone as precious as Kenma?

There was one downside to being head over heels for the younger man; Kuroo couldn’t tell him. Kenma’s anxiety was at an all-time high during Kuroo’s revelation. It was easy to conclude that adding this on his plate may have completely broken him. So instead, Kuroo accepted his feelings and learned how to love Kenma without expecting reciprocated feelings. Kenma did care about him, and maybe had his own version of love in regards to Kuroo. There was a reason the older man was the only one who Kenma relied on in times of need. Their friendship was better than most relationships, and if that was how their story was meant to end, the photographer was happy. Eventually, he had planned to tell Kenma about his feelings, but the years passed and life got in the way. Soon, the comfortable situation of the two’s relationship made it useless to confess, and Kuroo had to settle for taking his secret to the grave.

Then, his curious kitten found his secret album. Everything that he had planned to say during the fateful day was rendered useless by the accident, which shouldn’t have amused Kuroo as much as it had. Leave it to Kenma to let his curiosity unravel Kuroo’s carefully wrapped secret with one simple tug. He really was a cat in human’s clothing. The confession he gave Kenma lacked any of the glamour or style that he had thought it would. It was straightforward, with little built-up and no drama. Thinking back on it, Kuroo was thankful it went this way; Kenma never did appreciate the flashy weddings the same way he did. The editor was confused by the situation but didn’t pull back or refuse the confession. Instead, he let his curiosity rear up again, allowing their relationship to creep past the lines of friends to explore the unmarked territory between the two.

“Kenma, I’m home.” Kuroo’s bag was left in the doorway as he let out a quiet sigh, his shoes kicked off as he sauntered through the dark living room. The house, in general, was lacking the normal lighting when they were home, and Kuroo wondered if the editor was already sleeping. Suga had mentioned that Kenma had asked to leave early that night, but the smile that wrapped around the wedding planner’s lips didn’t hold an ounce of concern that would appear if Kenma was sick or overworked. Moving down the hallway, the photographer’s gaze caught of flicker of light coming from the kitchen. Slowly he made his way toward the glow, his eyes slowly blinking as he took in the surprising scene in front of him.

The softer orange light wasn’t artificial, but glowing from a few candles that scattered through the kitchen. A pair of plates were filled with foods that smelled delicious, though from the corner of the photographer’s eye it was apparent it came from two styrofoam containers lingering on the counter. His eyes traced back to the stereo on the side of the microwave that Kuroo was known for blasting when getting ready every morning, though the song now flowing through the speaks was softer than normal. The final piece of the intricate puzzle was Kenma, who was quietly blowing the flame that lingered on the match in his hand. Blond hair swayed from Kenma’s movement when
lifting his head, golden eyes easily finding Kuroo before shifting away.

“Welcome home.” His voice was soft but lingered with an emotion that strained the ending enough for Kuroo to notice.

“Happy to be home.” To emphasize his point, the photographer moved closer to his best friend, leaning down to gather him in a hug. Kemna’s body didn’t pull away at the gesture, his relaxed shoulders proving that the younger man was comfortable with Kuroo being in his personal space. The thought made a slow grin spread across the taller man’s face, pulling back to look back to the table across from them. “What’s the occasion, kitten?”

“I assumed that you hadn’t eaten because you were at the wedding so late, so…” Kenma’s quiet trail off was common between the two, Kuroo laughing before he patted his lean stomach and nodded.

“I’m pretty famished, actually. But you could have told me this is why you were coming home; I was a little worried that something was wrong.”

“That wasn’t my intention when planning this.”

“Wait, you planned it?” Kuroo watched Kenma walk over to his side of the table, sitting down and keeping his eyes away from the man still standing.

“Suga told me the real reason you didn’t drink at the party.”

“Ah, did he?” It wasn’t Kuroo’s intention to hide the truth from his friend, and the reasoning he gave to Kenma was true as well. But now that his semi-meddling boss had spoken to Kenma about the incident, the photographer wondered what his roommate thought about the situation. Despite giving Kenma distance and never bringing up the topic of advancing in sexual exploration, Kuroo was still a man. It wasn’t out of the ordinary for a man with his partner in the same vicinity as alcohol to want to push the envelope once guzzling some liquid courage. Though he felt right in his decision to not chance it, the photographer wondered if his friend would perceive the information in the wrong way.

“You were thinking of me, right?” At Kenma’s quiet question, Kuroo nodded, shrugging when he went to the fridge to grab them both something to drink.
“Partly, yeah. But you should know by now I’m always thinking about you.” Kuroo’s wicked grin did its job in making his companion blush and nervously push his hair behind his ear to try and distract himself. It was a benefit of being friends with the editor for so many years; he could read Kenma like his favorite book, which was why he had been so surprised that the younger man had slipped this plan under his nose.

“Don’t be corny.”

“Says the man who lit our kitchen up like a very romantic date,” Kuroo countered, wiggling his eyebrows to tease the man when pouring his beverage. Kenma silently pushed his fork toward the Thai food filling their plate, eyes cast down at the candle in front of him. His response came out so low that Kuroo could barely hear it even with their close proximity.

“Dollar tree lights and take-out isn’t very romantic.”

“It’s the thought that counts to me.” But when thinking over the man’s previous statement, a new question popped into Kuroo’s mind. “Kitten, how did you get all of this?”

“I went and got them.”

“By yourself?”

“Shouyou was on the phone with me, but...” Kuroo felt his knees weaken in surprise when Kenma gave a minuscule nod.

“How did you do?” He felt himself asking, Kenma staying quiet for a few long seconds before nervously licking his lips.

“I used some of my therapist’s techniques, which helped.” Which meant he really had felt out of place. Despite the large leaps of progress that Kenma had made with his anxiety since starting his therapy, there were still some things that he had yet to conquer on his own. Intense bouts of panic kept the man from going into stores alone. He was always hyper-aware of people who looked at him, whether they really were focused on him or the items in the aisle that he was in. Even when Kuroo came with him, Kenma disliked having the man out of reach. Ordering food was another hesitation that Kenma struggled with, always making the more outgoing Kuroo order for him. If it was online, then it was fine, so long as the photographer went to pick it up. Even if they had the food delivered, Kenma never answered the door to receive the food.
And yet here he sat, with food he picked up and candles he bought on his own. The fear of having to do these things had still been there, as he mentioned calling Shouyou for support. Even with the other man on the phone, Kenma must have struggled with the experience. It was unlike the editor to do something like this unless his desire to obtain the content (such as a new game) overrode his brain enough to push through it. Yet he had put himself through the pain and emotional turmoil in order to try and present Kuroo with a romantic evening. The older man knew this wasn’t because Kenma was trying to indulge himself, as he preferred things more subdued. He had made this ambiance for Kuroo.

“You’re so amazing.” His compliment was genuine, Kuroo not hesitating to lean down and kiss the exposed temple of his roommate. His next words were spoken quietly against the skin, emphasizing the awe in his own voice. “I’m really proud of you. Really really proud. Thank you for all of this.”

“Mhm.” Even if the vocal response was lackluster, Kuroo could feel the heat now warming up the skin of Kenma’s face, proving that the words were more effective than he wanted to give away. “The food’s going to get cold.”

“Well we wouldn’t want that, now would we?” Kenma’s finger stabbing into his side made the older man grunt and pull away, rubbing the sore spot as he retreated back to his side of the table. “Alright, I guess I’ve teased you enough. Let’s chow down.”

And like most of their moments together, the dinner was comforting. Their conversation was spoken between bites of delicious food but didn’t feel forced or lackluster. They never pushed a conversation that started to dwindle out, taking small stretches of silence to simply enjoy each other’s company. But being more perceptive than many gave him credit for, Kuroo was quick to pick up on something that felt different about the night. Despite their playful banter about their previous work and upcoming Star Wars movie marathon, something in Kenma’s body language signaled tension. He seemed nervous in his seat, and the photographer wondered if part of this was because of the implication of the dinner. In truth, it was their first ‘date’ since Kuroo’s admission. Did that make Kenma more uncomfortable than originally predicted? From the lack of eye contact and the stained-red cheeks, Kuroo assumed his prediction was right. And the feeling of making his best friend uncomfortable made the food lose some of its wonderful flavors.

“Give me your plate.” Kuroo tried to keep his smile casual when he took the plate from Kenma, balancing the group of dishes until he could drop them into the soapy water in their sink. He didn’t turn back to his roommate as he started to scrub the first plate, raising his voice so Kenma could hear him even with his back turned toward the table. “I’ll take care of the cleanup. It’s the least I can do since someone was out being amazing today without me.”
“Um.” The small voice grazed the older man’s ear, making Kuroo glance over his shoulder when dropping the clean plate into the drying rack. Kenma was standing in the doorway awkwardly, his fingers twining around the edge of his shirt. Seeing the look of confliction on the blond’s face, Kuroo gave an easy smile and waved toward the other man’s bedroom.

“It’s getting pretty late, and I know you’ve been dying to play your new *Monster Hunter* game. Go ahead, I’ve got some work I should look over for tomorrow’s walk-through.” Not waiting for Kenma’s response, Kuroo turned back to the soapy water, continuing to work on the task at hand. There were a few seconds before Kenma’s small feet walked out of the kitchen, and Kuroo let out a quiet breath he hadn’t known he was holding. It was rare that he ever felt like he needed to walk on eggshells with Kenma unless he was experiencing an anxiety attack. He hoped that by giving his friend an out for their ‘date’, it would help settle whatever he was feeling at the moment. He knew that he’d have to bring up the topic again in the morning, as he didn’t want this subject hanging over their heads. The main problem with modern relationships was the lack of communication, something that Kuroo and Kenma tended to do well with each other. And if the idea of having an intimate relationship was too taxing for his friend, then Kuroo would offer him, even more, time to think about their situation.

So when he walked into his room after finishing the dishes, he wasn’t expecting to see the blond sitting in his bed with no gaming console in his possession. It was an image that hadn’t been seen for a while. Though the editor had been known to sneak naps in Kuroo’s bed since the confession, this hadn’t happened. It was understandable, in Kuroo’s opinion, though the new scenario he found himself in wasn’t.

“Kitten? Is everything okay?” There was a chance that Kenma’s earlier anxiety had made it too hard to be alone in his room, something that happened a lot during the editor’s senior year of high school. But that theory was shifted from his mind when Kenma gave a nod, Kuroo slowly walking to sit on the side of the bed. “Okay, then why are you-”

“Have you changed your mind?” Kenma’s quiet question made Kuroo blink, taking time to think about the question before he spoke.

“Chanced my mind about what?” The small canine biting Kenma’s lower lip was noticed by the photographer, who waited patiently for Kenma’s words to form themselves.

“About...us being something...more.” The strained voice from earlier was back, and Kuroo didn’t hesitate to answer the question he thought was obvious.

“No. I am just as in love with you as I was yesterday, and will be tomorrow.” He didn’t mind the sappiness of his words, Kuroo placing his hand on Kenma’s cheek to lift the nervous gaze to focus on his own. Once sure he had captured the editor’s attention completely, Kuroo gave a simple
smile. “I am still very interested in being something with you, whether it’s your best friend or your soulmate.”

“Me too.” It was relieving to hear the affirmation that Kenma wasn’t afraid of their date, and Kuroo felt the tenseness of his shoulders drop into a relaxed pose while he laughed.

“I’m really happy to hear that.”

“Good.” There was a simplicity in the comment that the older man took as the end of their conversation, but he was caught off guard by Kenma’s next statement. “Which means you don’t have to hold back completely.”

“W-what?” It was rare that Kuroo stuttered, as he was known as the one who caught others off guard. But the implication behind the firm statement and confident stare were making it hard to fully grasp the situation.

“I’m not ready to go all the way,” Kenma replied, his smaller hand reaching up to grab the hand still lingering on his cheek. Their eyes didn’t separate as the blond lowered the touch slowly, Kuroo’s fingertips grazing the column of Kenma’s neck in a way that shifted the blood flow of Kuroo’s body toward his lower half. “But shouldn’t we find out if we’re compatible in this regard?”

“That’s a really good idea,” Kuroo mumbled, hoping his voice didn’t expose the growl lingering in his throat at the idea of exploring their physical chemistry. His eyes glanced at the hand that Kenma was dragging to rest on his hip, and Kuroo decided that he didn’t need guidance for leading Kenma’s body to lay back on the bed. His desire urged him to crawl between the legs parted before him, Kuroo’s lips quick to find solace along Kenma’s jawline. Even as his mind started to flood with different things to try to his roommate, Kuroo pulled back to glance down at the blushing man below him. “But the second you don’t feel comfortable, we stop. And if you don’t like it, you need to tell me. We need to go at your speed. Got it, kitten?”

“Mhm.” But from the urgent way that Kenma’s fingers grasped the front of Kuroo’s shirt to pull him into a kiss, Kuroo wondered how long the editor’s mind had been ruminating on their physical relationship. Their few shared kisses and cuddling on the couch had always caused some ‘tension’ in Kuroo’s pants, but what about Kenma? He had never taken into consideration that the editor was just as much of a man as Kuroo. Even if he wasn’t sex-crazed like Tooru, that didn’t mean he was indifferent about the subject. From the slow shiver that racked through Kenma’s body when Kuroo slipped his tongue between parted lips to fully taste the treat presented to him, it seemed he was receptive to deepening their intimacy.
Kuroo’s hands were slow in dragging the shirt up Kenma’s body, his thumbs slipping along the pale skin exposed. Kenma’s mouth widened into a gasp from the touch, and Kuroo felt his pride swell in getting a response from his exploring. Still, he paced himself, leaving the shirt bunched beneath the blond’s armpits to focus back on the kiss presented to him. Kenma arched his hips when the larger hands slid down his sides, fully taking in the new skin presented to him. The sweetness of the food they ate still lingered in Kenma’s mouth, and Kuroo found his own body responding to the way the smaller man’s hips squirmed beneath him. It was surreal to feel the movements he had always expected to stay dreams on lonesome nights. The break of their mouths came when the editor leaned his head back onto the pillow, his chest shaking as air rushed into it. The photographer’s fingers twitched against his sides at the sight, mentally wishing his camera was within reach. The beautiful scene that Kenma presented was making it uncomfortable for the older man, his pants reminding him of how tight they were against his hardened groin. Ignoring it, Kuroo leaned back down, his lips parting to collect the soft skin of Kenma’s neck.

Little noises sounded like music to the dark-haired man as he nibbled on the sensitive patch of nerves, his hands lazy in their drawing of invisible designs onto Kenma’s torso. He took his time exploring the neck and collarbone exposed to him, too focused on his adventure to remove Kenma’s shirt completely. It didn’t seem to affect the editor’s experience of either sensation Kuroo was giving him. Each slow drag of his fingertips or suck of his darkened lips made a thrill buzz in Kuroo’s stomach. He liked hearing the verbal encouragement from Kenma, even if it was obvious the younger man wanted to keep them to a minimum. The intensity of the moment grew when Kuroo brushed his nails under the waistline of Kenma’s jeans, a soft gasp urging Kuroo to pull his love-drunk lips away from the heated skin to speak.

“Is this okay?” He made sure the question was clear by running his thumb against the button on the front of Kenma’s pants, feeling the slight twitch of Kenma’s arousal hidden just beneath the fabric. Kenma’s golden gaze was hazy, but there was clarity in the solid nod from the blond before he turned his face and buried the pink cheek into the pillow beneath it. Grinning at the permission, Kuroo leaned up to place a gentle kiss on the man’s exposed cheek before turning his attention on stripping the pants and boxers from his friend’s legs. Half-lidded eyes were slow to take in the picture in front of him, snapping a mental shot of the man. Kenma’s beauty was so unique, even if he couldn’t see it himself. Everything about the man boiled Kuroo’s blood, but the older man took a quiet breath to keep his head from blanking.

Kenma was inexperienced in intimacy, and Kuroo could see the clear tensing of muscles in the smaller thighs. Even without his anxiety, exposing one’s self the first time was an intimidating experience. Hoping to soothe his lover, Kuroo placed his palms on the thighs, gently rubbing the exposed skin with soft touches. He tried to keep his voice steady as he hummed in appreciation, keeping his attention away from the obvious arousal in order to focus on relaxing Kenma. Sex with Kenma wouldn’t be worth it if the other wasn’t enjoying it. He had to go slow, even if his libido was quick to protest this idea. Kuroo’s attention stayed on the smooth movements on the blonde’s thighs, repeating the same lazy movements that had made the man quiver in need earlier. Little hands balled into the sheets at the motion, and Kuroo’s excitement grew when Kenma’s thighs replaced tension with goosebumps before parting them wider beneath Kuroo. The precome that decorated Kenma’s tip caught Kuroo’s attention, and the photographer kept one hand on a thigh while leaning forward to brush his lips against Kenma’s earlobe.
“You’re making it really hard to keep my composure.” The gruff tone that lingered in Kuroo’s voice was only common during his moments of lust, but he was sure it caught Kenma off guard by the sudden twitch of his hips beneath him. Once sure Kenma’s mind was drowning in pleasure, and not anxiety, Kuroo let his hand drift away from the soft skin of the thigh to circle the hardened cock of his lover. Instantly the hands by the editor’s sides grasped the sheets tighter, a soft moan and fluttering eyelids proving the motion was well-received. Encouraged by the response, Kuroo trailed his palm over the slickened head beneath him, using the precome to help slide his hand into a slow rhythm. His eyes couldn’t pull away from the face of his roommate, which continued to change with the lack of control over his expressions. His brows furrowed and his lips parted to pant, never seeming to have enough air despite the gasps he took. Slim hips were free to rut up into the motion of Kuroo’s hand, fighting for a faster pace despite the slow beat the dark-haired man had created. When Kuroo finally did heed the silent pleas of the quaking hips beneath him, Kenma responded with a back arch and one hand balled into the front of Kuroo’s shirt. “Ku-Kuroo.” Hearing his name mumbled through Kenma’s mouth shot straight into his body, Kuroo’s mouth quick to descend on the wet lips for a kiss that could only be described as filthy. His hand refused to slow now, eager to entice more moans out of his editor’s mouth. The grinding of Kenma’s hips into his hand was like a silent plea for more, and Kuroo refused to leave his friend wanting anything. His grip tightened toward the tip of the man, swiping his thumb along the sensitive skin to tease the pleasure through Kenma’s body. Instantly the mouth against his vibrated with a groan, showing the motion was edging him closer to the end. Kuroo basked in the feeling, continuing to tease the sensitive spot each time his hand slid up Kenma’s cock. Sweat had started to form on Kenma’s torso from the close proximity of their bodies, the yanking of Kuroo’s shirt pressing the bottom of his abs into the bare hip in front of him. The pressure of Kenma’s outer thigh increased against his own arousal each time the editor arched his hips, teasing the already hard problem in Kuroo’s pants. It was painful and arousing at the same time, and Kuroo rocked his hips to try and relieve some of the conflicting sensations.

A teasing squeeze around Kenma made the man below Kuroo tense, the editor gasping as he yanked away from their kiss. It was mere seconds later that the younger man came, his body trembling and unsteady thrusts being guided by the experienced hand of Kuroo. Kenma’s whimper of pleasure was toxic to Kuroo, who continued to press open-mouthed kisses to the exposed neck while helping Kenma through the orgasm. The free hand of the photographer was already unbuttoning his own pants, a shaky hand slipping beneath his boxers to grasp his oversensitive arousal. As his hand slowed on Kenma’s cock, his other hand sped up, hoping to chase the same high that had been given to his lover. The amount of arousal that had wound in his stomach made the first stroke painful, but it quickly dipped into bliss as he rutted into his own hand. His hips jumped at the sensation of a smaller hand resting against it, his head being tilted up to reclaim the soft lips of Kenma. He couldn’t concentrate on the kiss as he ground into his jerking hand, but his body was hyper-aware of the hand that was slowly creeping lower into the gap of his pants. “Do you want help?” The softness of the question brushing against his lips was paired with fingertips touching the back of his hand, the double sensation tipping Kuroo straight into an unsuspected orgasm. The lack of notice made the older man gasp before swearing, his eyes slamming shut as he rode the wave that had capsized him. Kenma’s hand pulled back instantly,
though didn’t travel too far away when both palms slid onto Kuroo’s back. The moment was intense and left Kuroo’s chests heaving as a result, still aware enough to keep himself upright. It took him longer than normal to catch his breath, though he was sure that was due to the partner. Slowly he re-opened his eyes, looking back down to see Kenma’s worried gaze focused on him. His smile was slanted as he let out a weak chuckle, leaning down to press a soft kiss to the tiny nose.

“I’m gonna need a rain check on that helping hand.” His corny joke and wink received a gentle eye roll from Kenma and a smack on his back.

“Gross.” Kuroo laughed at the reply and kissed Kenma again, indulging himself in the sweet taste of the man below him. He knew they needed to clean up, possibly shower, before they went to bed.

But for that moment, the only thing they needed was each other.

~**~

108 Sunshine drive was an address made to be an elementary school. Kageyama had never given much thought to the names of streets that he traveled down, yet this one he couldn’t help but feel was appropriate for the bright red school sitting in front of him. The building’s walls were quite colorful on the inside, painting of rainbows and flowers peppering most of the blue hallway. It was awkwardness that made him grip the container resting in his hands tighter, silently cursing himself for trusting in Suga as much as he did. Despite being a good person, Kageyama knew the wedding planner could be just as mischievous as Oikawa, and he wondered if this was one of those moments.

“Good morning, may I help you?” The bright smile of the school secretary made Kageyama feel even more out of place, hoping that it didn’t show in his voice.

“I’m uh...my name is Kageyama Tobio and I’m not sure if I’m in the right place but-”

“Did you say Kageyama?” The woman’s eyes seemed to light up in joy at his hesitant nod, her smile forming a more genuine look that lost the practice aura to it. “Are you perhaps looking for Shouyou?”

“Hinata Shouyou,” Kageyama clarified, though he wasn’t sure why. It was obvious that this woman somehow knew who he was despite him never setting eyes on her before. She hid what he
assumed to be a giggle as she stood up from her desk, moving around it to pop into the hallway.

“It’s great to finally meet you; Shouyou always talks about your baking skills.” Pretty brown eyes flickered down to the case in his hand, tinting them with curiosity. “Did you bring a birthday cake? Even though his birthday isn’t for another two days—”

“N-no!” Why the guess embarrassed him enough to shout, Kageyama wasn’t sure, but he felt his face burst into color at her face morphed into shock. Trying to collect himself, Kageyama stared down at the container, thumbing the edge of the dark blue cover. “They’re cookies that Hinata asked me to make. Fo-For his class.”

“Oh, that’s right, he did mention something like that. He never told me he actually got to finish them, though.” She tapped her lower lip before she glanced back up at Kageyama, giving him another smile before she spoke. “Well, let me show you to his room. I’m sure the kids will be happy to see you.”

At least someone would be.

The fact that Kageyama and Hinata hadn’t spoken to each other since the party was one of the reasons the baker was currently making his way down the long corridor of the school. Up until the night before, Kageyama had no intention of reaching out to him, either. From his point of view, he hadn’t done anything thing wrong. Okay, he had been late to the party. That he could take responsibility for, even if most of it was due to his job’s needs. He had intended of scrounging up an apology for Hinata when he made it to the venue, but all of that flew out the window when the drunk teacher had attacked him in the middle of the arcade. First, it had been verbally, as the shorter man had started to yell at him with slurred words that Kageyama struggled to understand. Hinata’s loud wails of insults soon caught the attention of other people in the area, who either looked at them strangely or giggled with their friends when walking by. The situation was mortifying for the man who struggled with social gatherings to begin with, but Hinata refused to ‘shut up’ no matter how many times Kageyama yelled it at him.

Having enough embarrassment for one day, the baker promptly shoved his hand onto Hinata’s mouth to force him to shut up before trying to drag him into a corner to talk. Kageyama made it all of three steps before a searing pan sprayed through the side of his palm. Hinata, being the reasonable adult he was, had bitten Kageyama’s hand hard enough to almost draw blood. The indents of the smaller man’s teeth were visible even in the darkened room of the arcade, his shock of the attack making him pull away from Hinata’s mouth. The next few moments were a little blurry to Kageyama, his anger and pain blocking out most of the argument. But he did remember Hinata’s loud proclamation that he had “claimed” him, just as Oikawa had told him to.

Kageyama had never been as embarrassed/infuriated with a person as he had been at hearing
Hinata’s statement. It was one thing for Oikawa to make fun of him; the man had always made the
claim that Kageyama was too cold for anyone to want to ‘make him theirs’. Despite trying to act
like the words didn’t mean anything to the baker, the younger man hated how alone he felt
whenever the statement was tossed his way. He would always throw himself into his job afterward,
and the sting of the words would eventually fade away. But the fact that Oikawa had gotten Hinata
in on the joke, had sent the only guy that Kageyama may have actually liked, to ‘claim’ him like a
pet instead of a human with feelings…

It had really been the final straw.

“I don’t want to be marked by someone like you!”

Too emotional and frustrated at himself for letting Hinata in so deep, Kageyama had left the
function. He didn’t want to stay somewhere that thought of him as the butt of all the jokes. It
wasn’t like he thought he was the best catch out there; Kageyama understood he had issues. The
lack of social skills and his awkward facial expressions had always made it hard for him to find
people that liked him. But for the first time in years, Kageyama had thought that someone was
willing to take a chance on him. Hinata had acted like he liked the weirdness that came with being
friends with the baker. Yet at the first chance he got, the teacher had turned Kageyama into the
laughing stock of the party.

Except, according to Suga-san, that wasn’t the truth. When realizing the attempt had been advice
(“Horrible horrible advice from Tooru which I will properly yell at him about later”) and not a way
to humiliate Kageyama, the baker was rushed with guilt. He hadn’t stayed to see the consequences
of his actions, but hearing that Hinata had cried made something inside of him hurt. The smaller
man was the first real friend he had made outside of his job since he was a kid, and he had instantly
destroyed that with an assumption and a few harsh words. Unsure of what to do, Kageyama turned
to the wedding planner for advice, and it was through a little bit of brainstorming that he
remembered the cookies that were never made. Instantly Suga supported the idea, encouraging the
baker to take the rest of Saturday off to make the treats.

“Nobody can stay mad when you bake them something.”

Now armed with chocolate chip, sugar, and snickerdoodles, Kageyama stared at the door to the
classroom the woman had informed him Hinata taught. Taking a long breath, Kageyama pulled the
door open slowly, hoping not to pull any attention to himself just yet. Luckily, the class was on the
opposite side of the room, their eyes staring up at the man that Kageyama had come to see.

“The prince gave the princess his hand, and they all went into the great hall for supper.” Unlike his
normally loud voice, Hinata spoke quietly, letting the children listen with eager ears as he turned
the page and continued. “That very evening the prince and princess were married. The next day the
prince took his bride to his father’s palace, and there they lived happily ever afterward. The End.”

“Wow!” One of the children with curly brown hair gasped at the end, her eyes shining brightly as she stared at the book Hinata was now closing. “So the prince and the princess were never bothered by the dragon lady again?”

“Nope, they were able to stay together and be happy.” Hinata’s grin was wide as the children started to chatter in excitement, the teacher placing the book back on the shelf behind him.

“So will you marry a princess too?” The boy’s question made the small man freeze for a moment, though Kageyama was sure he was the only one to notice it. As quick as the hesitation came, Hinata started moving again, leaning forward to ruffle the boy’s hair.

“I hope I’ll get to marry someone who I love very dearly.” There was a wistful tone in the teacher’s voice that tugged at something in Kageyama’s stomach. As if hearing the internal crisis, Hinata glanced up, his eyes easily widening at the appearance of the baker. “Ka-Kageyama?!”

“Where?!?” Suddenly, the group of kids was turning, their faces staring in awe at the man. Flustered by the attention, Kageyama froze, his body stiff as a board while he tried to think of something to say. The moment of panic was enough for the kids to react, their little feet darting across the room to eagerly jump around Kageyama’s long legs.

“It’s really him!” The girl from before was smiling wide enough for the tall man to see the gap from her missing tooth.

“What’s in the box, mister?” He wasn’t sure which boy said that, but his eyes instantly drifted away from the mob by his feet to look back at the teacher. Hinata was still standing where the children had left him, his face a mixture of emotions.

“What...what are you doing here?” The question made Kageyama scowl, disliking the hesitation in the other man’s voice.

“You left the cookies for your class, so I brought them over.” The mention of the sugary treats had the whole class jumping, Kageyama nervous one of them would end up tripping over his feet and hurting themselves. Seeming to recognize the discomfort of the baker, Hinata snapped out of his previous hesitation and moved forward, quick to take charge of the situation.
“I don’t know if they should get any cookies. Nobody is in their seats being quiet.” The request worked perfectly, the horde of children now scrambling to their designated desks. Despite the weird tension in the air, Kageyama felt his heart warm at Hinata’s laugh, the teacher waving to two men standing to the side of the room. “Mr. Sekimukai, can you and Mr. Izumi hand out these treats so I can talk to Kageyama?”

“No problem.” The man with the darker hair moved over to the two, taking the case from Kageyama before Hinata tugged the baker to a door. He barely saw the teacher’s name written on the front before he was being dragged into an office, the smaller man quick to shut the door behind him. The wall between them and the classroom muffled the other teacher’s voice, leaving nothing to distract the two from each other. The silence was quick to encapsulate the room, making Kageyama shift uncomfortably in his shoes. The silent stare that Hinata had focused on him was mirroring the same disjointed look from earlier, intensifying the nerves rushing through the baker.

“Suga said you can keep the container.” The off-handed comment made Hinata blink, the teacher seeming to snap out of whatever daze his mind had gone into.

“Oh, uh, th-thanks!” Kageyama had expected a snide comment or rude remark from Hinata, but the jittery response had caught him off guard. Was Hinata...nervous? The ending of their last conversation had made Kageyama assume the other man would be angry or hurt, but the semi-guilty look that flashed in the brown eyes in front of him was contradicting his thoughts. “You didn’t have to do this; I kind of feel bad now because of...uh, you know.”

“Huh?” Confused again, the baker felt his eyebrows furrow as he stepped closer to the teacher avoiding his stare.

“These were supposed to be apology cookies.”

“Eh? Apology for what?” The slight twitch under his eye came from the dumbstruck look on Hinata’s face. Did this idiot have to have everything spelled out for him?

“For the party, idiot.”

“Don’t call me that! I was the one who was supposed to say sorry for biting you.”

“That’s after I shoved my hand in your mouth,” Kageyama replied, rolling his eyes at the squawk that Hinata gave in reply.
“But I yelled at you. So I’m sorry.” He knew, somewhere in the back of his mind, that their argument was stupid. The two were fighting over who should be sorry, a notion that they could both technically feel. The fight wasn’t really anyone’s fault 100%. But despite knowing it was dumb, Kageyama gritted his teeth and argued back.

“Because I was late!”

“You had an excuse, Bakayama!”

“So what?”

“So if I hadn’t gotten drunk to hide how nervous I was, then none of this would have happened!” The statement cut the argument that Kageyama had already prepared to say off, the baker letting the statement run through his mind once before speaking.

“Why were you nervous?” Seeming to realize the question was not a retort to their original fight, Hinata let his shoulders fall back down as he leaned on the door behind him.

“It’s like...when you were little and asked a popular kid to come to your birthday, and you’re all stressed out until they finally show up. And if they don’t show up after saying they will, it’s a way worse feeling then if they had just said no to start with.”

“But I’m not popular.” The bluntness in his voice seemed to make Hinata blush, the smaller man glaring up at his confused counterpart.

“Obviously! But that’s not the point here.”

“Then what is?”

“Because I-” seeming to stumble over his own thoughts, Hinata tugged on his hair once before he waved it into the air. “I had a plan to-we just-I was going to talk to you about the night we were supposed to make cookies!”
“Oh.” Because in all honesty, Kageyama wasn’t sure what to think about that particular night now. He knew how he felt about the dance/kiss, but the conflicting situations since then and Hinata’s avoidance of the topic had left him unsure what the other took away from it. Trying to remember Suga’s advice in talking with Hinata, Kageyama took a few seconds to think about his question before asking it. “Was it weird for you?”

“...Not really.” The response shouldn’t have made Kageyama’s lips wobble with a smile, but the reaction came without warning. Hinata’s eyes flickered up to the motion, losing some of his nervous energy as he stepped closer to the baker. “What about you?”

“What about me?”

“Did it...was it bwah for you, too?”

“I don’t even know what that means,” Kageyama grumbled, though Hinata gave him a look that made the taller man think over the implied question. “I...think so. I mean, I wouldn’t be opposed to...it happening again sometime.”

“Really?” Hinata’s perky answer made Kageyama blush, but the man swallow the lump of embarrassment to stare down at his own shoes and nod.

“Yeah.” The two stared at each other for a moment before Kageyama’s mouth opened, words tumbling before he could second-guess himself. “And I want a redo for your birthday. Maybe on Wednesday, if you’re not doing anything...I know it’s your actual birthday-”

“Wednesday’s great. Perfect actually!” The eager answer seemed to instantly embarrass Hinata, though Kageyama couldn’t deny he was feeling awkward as well. Still, the answer made him feel good, and he nodded before looking back up to meet Hinata’s stare. The teacher cracked his signature smile at the younger man, making Kageyama roll his eyes. A laugh was quick to fill the room, the teacher jerking his thumb over his shoulder. “I should head back to class since I’m the teacher and all.”

“Obviously dumbass-” The end of the sentence was swallowed up by Hinata’s mouth, the teacher quick to kiss the unprepared baker. It was shorter than their previous one, Kageyama barely having time to respond to the warm sensation tingling against his mouth before the shorter man was pulling away, stepping back to grin up at the man in front of him.
“Yup still feels *bwah.*” And like the wind, Hinata was gone, leaving Kageyama standing in his office in shock. Slowly he leaned against the desk behind him, shaking his head to erase the fuzziness that Hinata had created with his kiss.

But even as he left the school, the feeling stayed with him for the rest of the day.

Chapter End Notes

Gotta love that 'bwah' feeling! So I've been looking at the end of this story, and it looks like we've got about six chapters left. I hope that you'll all stick around to see what we've got going for our favorite couples. Comments, kudos, and lots of love to all!

Next Chapter: Downtime Desire
Suga wasn’t tired; he was *exhausted*. He knew that he loved his job, and today was no exception. But for the first time in years, the wedding planner worried that he wouldn’t be able to make his customers happy. Never before had he planned a wedding with *two* couples, and now he was realizing why that was such a bad idea. The twin brides had both been proposed to in the same month, which led to the ‘innovative’ decision to have their weddings together. For them, it was easier on the family and friends they shared. But for the wedding planner, it was a nightmare. Despite sharing the same genetics, their ideas of a ‘perfect’ wedding were as similar as night and day. One wanted glam and a romantic feel to her happy day, while the other wanted country and subtle. Their colors clashed, and their price ranges were in completely different directions. The only thing they seemed to share was their stubbornness, neither twin willing to change their mind about the shared wedding or their choices.

Kageyama’s confusion about the cake choice and Yamaguchi’s panic over the constantly changing flower arrangements only added to the weight on Suga’s shoulders as he drove home. The night had long since come, but Suga had felt guilty leaving without sketching another suggestion for the floor plan of the ceremony. He’d made four so far, but none had been agreed upon by the sisters. His car’s clock showed that he had missed dinner by a few hours, but Suga felt too tired to even think about making food. That didn’t stop his stomach from protesting with loud growls and painful cramps. The movement of his belly was so distracting, that Suga almost missed the familiar car taking residence in one of the guest parking spots of his apartment. But it was harder to look over the handsome man sitting on the trunk of the car.

“Daichi?” Suga’s confusion while closing his car door was met with a smile from the officer, the taller man hopping off the trunk with a wave.
“About time you got home. I thought your food was going to get cold.” The mention of food set out another loud gurgle from Suga, the wedding planner feeling his face flush at the blink that Daichi gave him. “And it sounds like I came at the perfect time.”

“Sorry, it was just a really long day at work,” Suga replied, Daichi giving an understanding nod before he presented the bag that had a styrofoam container in it.

“Then I guess Oikawa wasn’t kidding about Code Marigold.” Hearing the silly phrase come out of Daichi’s mouth was almost too much for Suga, who groaned and rubbed his hands over his face.

“Don’t even start,” Suga warned, Daichi’s laugh soft as he stepped closer to the planner. Suga glanced between his fingers warily, only removing his hands when the taller man leaned down to kiss him. The connection shared was short, the officer pulling back before using his thumb to point behind him.

“Let’s get you off your feet; you look ready to collapse.”

“Glad to know I look exactly how I feel.” The walk to his apartment felt like a hike through the desert, though Suga had a feeling he had been hanging around with Tooru too long to feel that dramatic. It was nice to see his apartment after being cooped up in his office for so long, Suga quick to toss off his shoes before crawling onto the couch. The softness of the cushion against his back was amazing, and the wedding planner let out a pleased sigh while closing his eyes. He felt the cushion at the end of the couch sink down, but Suga was too tired to pull his head up to look at Daichi.

“You’re going to have to sit up in you want to eat.”

“Feed me?” but even as he made the ridiculous request, the planner forced himself to sit up, fighting against his heavy eyelids to look at the food now being placed in front of him. His mouth was quick to water at the glazed chicken and steaming rice, Suga not hesitating to scoop the first mouthful onto his fork. He tried not to show how happy his stomach got at the introduction of food, but from the side smile that Daichi gave at Suga’s hum of approval, he knew he had failed. Trying to hide his embarrassment, Suga changed the subject. “How did you know I was staying so late at work?”

“Oikawa gave me a call. Said you may need a pick-me-up after the crazy day you’ve had.”
“Seriously?” The news was surprising to Suga, sure that his assistant was too distracted by his date with Iwaizumi to notice how fatigued the wedding planner was when he left. Oikawa had been giddy throughout the day, despite denying it whenever his boss would mention the mood change. But his high energy didn’t seem to affect Tooru’s perceptive skills, and Suga was thankful that his assistant had thought to call Daichi.

“Yup. Now, while you eat and unwind from your hectic day, hand over your feet.” The strange statement made Suga blink, Daichi’s smile warming the planner’s heart as he patted his thigh. “I believe I still owe you a foot rub. What better time to cash it in than now, right?”

“You’re an angel,” Suga replied, his body shifting to lift his left foot in Daichi’s direction.

“Just doing my duties as your boyfriend.” The word was still new to Suga’s ears, and he tried not to blush as he took another bite of his dinner. Daichi was more than he ever thought he’d deserve. He wasn’t the smoothest at flirting, but he made up for it with his caring demeanor and gentle soul. Plus, Suga found his awkwardness sort of cute.

But once the officer started to massage the abused heels of his feet, Suga’s mind melted. How was Daichi so good at this? The tingling sensations that flooded the planner’s legs felt amazing, and he couldn’t help the way his toes curled in pleasure. He took a few more bites of his food, but his mind was no longer focused on his meal. The half-eaten dinner was soon placed back on the table, Suga preferring to close his eyes and lean his head onto the back of the couch. Firm fingers trailed over the sensitive skin of his feet, and Suga felt a shiver run through his body. He tried not to let the hiccup of a moan skip over his lips when Daichi switched feet, but the feeling was amazing. When was the last time that Suga allowed himself to be pampered? Years, probably. So he indulged himself in the feeling, letting himself flush while his muscles started to unwind through his body.

“You feel amazing.” The words slipping through his lips wasn’t meant to sound so breathless. The pause of Daichi’s hands meant that the officer had noticed, and Suga struggled to lift his head up to glance down at the man by his feet. Daichi’s cheeks looked warm as he glanced away from Suga, the man giving a gentle cough before replying.

“Glad you’re enjoying it.”

“Daichi.” Calling to his boyfriend, the planner waited until the dark-haired man looked back to him to curl his finger. “Come here.”

“Yeah?” The slow way the officer crawled up his body made the small warmth that had pooled in
Suga’s stomach explode into a full fire, Suga allowing himself to be caged in by the strong arms on either side of the couch cushion. His legs were pushed apart by the hips of the cop, Suga’s thighs cushioning the waist on either side before locking his ankles on Daichi’s back.

“I think we should move to the bedroom.” He hoped the underlying meaning of his words were heard clear against the lips his own were brushing against, Suga keeping his hazel eyes focused on the stunned stare above him.

“You sure? I know you’re tired from work.” Daichi’s consideration was sweet, but not what the planner needed at the moment. Giggling while he wrapped his arms around Daichi’s neck, Suga lifted off the cushion he was laying against to kiss his boyfriend. He took his time to nip at the officer’s lower lip, dragging it between his teeth for a second when pulling away from the kiss. Then his mischievous gaze was back on the blown-out pupils of the officer, pressing his hips up to rub into Daichi’s firm stomach.

“I think I’m awake enough for this.”

“Jesus.” Though Suga always found Daichi attractive, there was something special about seeing the other man’s resistance snap. Maybe it was because it was normally followed by the strong man lifting Suga up, and the wedding planner couldn’t stop the excited thrill that slipped through his spine at the feeling. His mouth was quick to find the officer’s neck as he was carried to the bedroom, letting his tongue slip over the pulse that was starting to beat faster with each swipe. Despite the obvious hard-on now pressing into his stomach, Suga was surprised by the gentle care that his boyfriend used when placing him back on the bed. The comforter felt warm on his back, and Suga gave a gentle nip to the sensitive skin resting against his mouth before pulling back to look up at the man above him. Daichi’s face was flushed, and the darkness of his brown eyes distracted Suga.

“You’re really handsome.” Suga’s words seemed to humble Daichi, the officer’s smile lacking a look of conceited pride or knowledge. His sincerity was as strong as ever, Daichi’s hand falling to rest on Suga’s cheek before giving a smile that melted Suga from the inside.

“Easy for someone who looks like you to say.” Then Daichi’s lips were back, kissing any reply from the planner’s mouth. Suga hummed into the exchange, his body buzzing with desire to be closer to the man above him. Daichi’s hands were slow to slip down Suga’s side, bunching the bottom of his shirt under his palms before dragging the constricting fabric up his body. Suga was quick to mirror the action, the planner yanking at the collar of Daichi’s shirt. He managed to get it over the broad shoulders of his boyfriend before he was distracted, firm lips closing around his nipple to nip at the sensitive skin. A quiet moan from the short man’s lips filled the air, Suga shuddering under the sweet ministrations. His skin felt hot.
“I need this off.” Suga’s request was followed by a tug on Daichi’s shirt, the officer giving a soft chuckle against the nipple in his mouth before slowly pulling away.

“Eye for an eye, Koushi.” The compromise didn’t stop at shirts and resulted in the clothes of both men crumpled on the floor. Suga’s appreciation of hard skin against his own apparent through the twitch in his arousal. Daichi’s large hands caging his hips while pulling him to his knees sent a heavy dose of heat through the planner’s stomach, Suga easily following the guiding motion of his boyfriend. The slow brush of lips on his bare back made Suga shiver, the wedding planner letting out a quiet moan at the intimate touch.

Though their schedules were hard to match up, the two hadn’t been idle in exploring their sexual chemistry. From this, Suga had learned something important; Daichi was always a sensual lover. He never took a touch, a kiss, a moment between the two for granted. He pampered the wedding planner with affection throughout the process, leaving Suga more breathless than if the two had gone all night together. Even now, in the lewd position, the fair-haired man didn’t feel dirty. His hands clenched the sheets as Daichi’s fingers slipped down his body, the gel coating the digit warmed as it slipped inside Suga. Teeth were gentle as they scraped the pale shoulder of the man kneeling on the bed, Suga’s moan low while trying to press back into the familiar sensation. A warm hand on his hip kept him still, Daichi taking his time in slowly pulling sounds from Suga’s wet lips. The thorough way the officer touched him, now pressing two fingers into Suga, made the planner tremble in his spot. Wanting more of the addictive feeling, Suga parted his thighs wider, hoping his partner would catch onto his needs.

But Daichi ignored the silent request, continuing the slow thrust of his fingers inside of Suga. The pleasure that twisted in the planner’s stomach was hot, but not enough to tip him over the edge. A brush of Daichi’s fingertips over his prostate made Suga’s spine arch, hips breaking the hold in order to rut backward into the touch. A hum next to his ear proved that Daichi approved of the reaction, and the slow roll of curling fingers inside of him exposed the man to even more pleasure. The first time that Suga had given Daichi permission to take their sexual play to the next level, the officer’s fingers hadn’t been able to locate the spot inside Suga. The feeling of having Daichi inside him was still intense, and a few gentle strokes to his cock made it each enough for Suga to come. But now, Daichi was a pro with his hands. His touch was lightening hot, and Suga’s whimper was filled with bliss.

“You think you could finish from just this?” The question came in sync with a third finger sliding inside of Suga. The moment of uncomfortable stretch was quick to dissipate for pleasure, and Suga’s hips started a rhythm with Daichi’s fingers that were slower than he wanted.

“Pr-Probably!” he admitted through a gasp, forcing his eyes to open before he sent a glance back to the man now leaving soft hickeys across his shoulder blade. “But I don’t want that.”

“You sure?” The slow stroke against his prostate was deliberate, and the collapse of Suga’s arms
underneath him made his chest drop down to the comforter. He didn’t mind the movement, as it changed the angle of Daichi’s fingers inside of him, rubbing him in a way that left moans falling from his lips like water. He fought to keep his eyes open at the sensation, his hips grounding into the motion a few times before responding.

“I wanna go all the way.” The statement paused the hand behind him, giving Suga enough reprieve to catch the breath that had eluded him. Hazel eyes tried to focus as they caught the wide gaze of his boyfriend, the look of surprise showing that Daichi wasn’t expecting the reply. “Do you not want-”

“I do.” His hips pressed into the side of Suga’s butt, the hardness proving the thought was more than appreciated. Laughing, Suga allowed his muscles to clench around the digits inside him, enjoying the instant curl his fingers gave in response.

“I’m ready. Make you yours, Daichi.” Whispering the words, Suga kept eye contact with his boyfriend, hoping his eyes would show the desire thumping through his blood.

“Koushi.” The word was spoken into Suga’s lips, Daichi leaning down to kiss his boyfriend. Suga allowed the kiss to deepen, feeling he would never get enough of the taste that lingered in Daichi’s mouth. The tongue that swiped across the lower lip of the planner sent tingles shooting through his skin, and Suga pushed back onto shaky hands to crane his head back into the kiss. Daichi used the movement to his benefit, sliding his fingers out of Suga before guiding him backward onto the bed. Still, they continued to kiss, the dark-haired man’s hands cupping under Suga’s thighs to lift him up. The sensation of one of the hands left Suga’s skin, but the loss was soon forgiven by the wedding planner when feeling his boyfriend’s tip brush against his ass.

“That feels amazing,” Suga’s shaky words were soon hushed by another kiss from Daichi. The officer absorbed the lewd sounds that were produced from Suga’s mouth when Daichi lowered himself into Suga, the planner gasping as the sensation. Though he’d had intimate relationships with men before, it had been years, and the slight burn that came with the movement made Suga hiss. Instantly Daichi stopped, brown eyes glancing down at Suga in concern.

“You okay?”

“Just been a while,” Suga admitted sheepishly, letting out a slow breath before planting his hands on Daichi’s shoulders. “But it feels good. Don’t stop.”

“Okay.” A soft kiss under his eye made Suga close both slowly, his body relaxing into Daichi’s gentle treatment. Daichi continued to pepper the man’s face with kisses as he pushed into the
planner, the mixture of ache and pleasure making Suga shiver. The hand on the back of his thigh tightened its pressure, lifting the limp limb higher in order to press their hips fully together. The process was overwhelming to Suga, who felt himself smiling despite the quiet intimacy of the moment.

“Romantic till the end, aren’t you, Officer Sawamura?” The teasing tone seemed to hit its mark, Suga’s gasp following the slight jerk of Daichi’s hips.

“Don’t call me that,” Daichi grumbled, though the heat in his voice made the planner feel giddy at the effect. The dark-haired man groaned as he dropped his head onto Suga’s shoulder, hips refusing to stay stagnant. “I won’t be able to look people in the face the same way now.”

“You going to arrest me, then?” Teasing the good-natured man was a specialty of Suga’s, and he didn’t waste the opportunity to walk his fingers over the exposed tan collarbone, squirming his hips once sure the ache from before was gone. “Put me in cuffs and take me as your prisoner?”

“You’re doing this on purpose.” The words were brushed over the sensitive skin of Suga’s neck, and a slow thrust from his boyfriend had the fair-haired man tilting his head against the pillows with a moan. “But I’m not going to keep you against your will.”

“Oh? Why not?” Another slow movement from Daichi had Suga’s breath wavering, fingernails biting into the tough skin of the officer from the wave of pleasure that rolled inside of him. A pause filled the air between them, and Suga wondered if the words had hit a sensitive spot. Before he could ask, however, the pace of Daichi’s movements quickened, making Suga moan in pleasure. There was no hesitation in the way his boyfriend moved, grounding into the prostate that he had mapped out so perfectly with his fingers before.

“I want you to be with me because you want me inside you, every night.” The way that Daichi spoke the confident statement turned every switch inside Suga on, the wedding planner arching his back off the bed. Everything felt hot, his skin desperate to feel Daichi’s hands on it. The officer kept the rougher pace as his mouth mapped out the collarbone and neck of Suga with urgency. Every thrust felt like lightning, and Suga’s cries bounced off the walls as means to urge Daichi on. The pleasure that had waned for a moment spiked through Suga like a dagger, and he felt addicted to the sensation.

“Da-Daichi!” His toes spasmed in the air from the angle Daichi held his leg, and the wedding planner desperately tried to press himself closer to the officer now thoroughly fucking him. A hand grasped around Suga’s cock, the thumb brushing over Suga’s tip dragging a whine from the smaller man. The pleasure was coursing through him, and he couldn’t decide which sensation he wanted to follow. The sensual drag of Daichi’s swollen lips against the edge of his ear made Suga shutter, his stomach cramping from the start of his orgasm.
“Don’t hold back, Koushi. I’ve got you.” The command felt impossible to ignore, and the pressing heat in Suga’s stomach seemed to snap. Crying out while he pulled Daichi into his chest, Suga sobbed out the officer’s name, his orgasm covering the hand stroking him. Daichi’s pace didn’t slow, the sensations dragging out the pleasure for Suga. The shoulder still under Suga’s grasp shuddered while Daichi’s back tensed, a few hard jerks of Daichi’s hips showing the man had also reached his pique. Suga’s arms dragged Daichi down into him, holding the man through his trembling orgasm. For a few seconds, the only sound in the room was the disjointed breathing of the two men now spent from their sexual endeavors. The feeling of Daichi pressed against him made Suga’s heart warm, and his giggle was quiet when a sluggish kiss was pressed against his chin.

“That tickles,” Suga whispered, waiting for the man to lift his head to give him a grin. Daichi’s sleepy smile was slow to appear, and Suga took the moment to lean up and kiss his nose. “Thank you for helping me relax.”

“Not really sure that’s what ended up happening,” Daichi answered, dropping his head back onto Suga’s chest. Humming for a response, the wedding planner traced the muscles still quivering in Daichi’s back. Though he knew he’d be a little sore from using areas he hadn’t for a while, the content feeling swimming through his body was refreshing. He didn’t feel drained after the sex; if anything, he felt amazing. He couldn’t remember having the same sensation when sleeping with his previous boyfriends. Daichi just felt different, and Suga couldn’t place his finger on why. But he liked the feeling he got when being around the officer. Knowing that they shared such a strong sexual chemistry only heightened that.

“You think we should clean up? I don’t think your roommate will be happy walking into this mess.”

“He’s not my roommate; just a temporary bodyguard.” But from the slow chuckle from Daichi, the statement didn’t seem as believable as Suga pretended it was. “And besides, I don’t think he’s coming home tonight.”

“Why do you say that?”

“Because I’m not the only one who had a date with a sexy officer tonight.” Suga’s statement made Daichi look up, blinking once before giving an arched eyebrow.

“Did you just call Hajime sexy?” The disbelief on his boyfriend’s face caused Suga to burst into laughter, pulling Daichi back down into a kiss.
“When you said date, Iwa-chan, grocery shopping was not what I had in mind.” The haughty tone that Oikawa used when addressing him made Iwaizumi roll his eyes, the man staring at the pasta choices in front of him.

“My shift ran late, and I didn’t have time to pick up supplies before our meet-up time.”

“Then just take me out to dinner!”

“Waste of money,” His reply made the assistant’s face puff in annoyance, Iwaizumi smirking at the response. Despite knowing that Oikawa was the master at getting under people’s skin, the officer knew a few tricks of his own. And knocking the king of his pedestal every now and then was a good feeling.

“You’re so mean to me, Iwa-chan!” He chose not to reply to the statement, pulling two boxes of pasta off the shelf and turning to Oikawa.

“You want elbows or ziti?”

“...Ziti.” The huffed out answer was all Iwaizumi needed to hear, dropping two boxes of the preferred choice into his basket before pushing the cart forward.

“All we need to do is get some parmesan cheese and we can head out.” Talking to the man now trailing behind him, the officer glanced up at the numbers of the aisles to try and find his next target. Before he could move forward, however, his cart was yanked in the opposite direction.

“What the hell, Shitty-kawa?”

“Who comes to the grocery store and doesn’t go into the cereal aisle?”

“People above the age of ten.”
“A choice of cereal can tell a lot about a person!” Oikawa’s theory made Iwaizumi roll his eyes, but the wedding assistant didn’t seem bothered by the lack of faith. Instead, the man stood in the middle of the aisle, tossing his hands out to either side of him and sending a smile the officer’s way. “Now, if you had to pick any one of the choices in this aisle to have for breakfast, what would it be? And I’m not a choice, sadly.”

“This is dumb.” Iwaizumi wanted his point to be stated, despite knowing that it would be ignored by the brunet.

“This is science.”

“Science.” Repeating the word didn’t seem to shake his date’s confidence in the statement. Questioning how he had ended up in the predicament he was in, Iwaizumi crossed his arms over the handle of the cart and shrugged. “Fine. The only cereal I eat is Cheerios.”

“Cheerios?!” The look of betrayal on Oikawa’s face was instant, the assistant grabbing at his heart while he shook his head. “That’s the most boring type of cereal there is out there!”

“Everything else is loaded with sugar,” Iwaizumi replied, pointing to the box of Cookie Crisps next to him. “There is literally nothing nutritious in this entire box of food.”

“That’s the point of cereal.” Oikawa’s brown eyes glanced along the aisle before they settled on a red box, snagging the sugary breakfast item off the shelf to hold it in front of Iwaizumi. “Having a box of Lucky Charms after a hangover is the best way to start the day. Plus, all the colorful shapes brings me right back to my childhood. It makes me spunky and creative, while still providing me with acute awareness of the benefits of balance between the marshmallows and the gross grainy pieces.”

“I can’t tell if you’re being serious or not.” Iwaizumi’s skepticism made Oikawa frown, the look of disapproval quick to disappear when the man dropped the box into their cart.

“Let’s buy it!”

“What for?”

“I need something to eat in the morning.” The suggestive wink sent his way made Iwaizumi flush,
quick to shake his head.

“Nobody said you were spending the night.”

“Aw, don’t be shy, Iwa-chan.” Ignoring his date, the officer moved to remove the heart attack from his cart. It was no surprise when Oikawa stepped between him and the box, lightly bumping his fists into Iwaizumi’s chest. “Why do you have to be such a fun-sucker?”

“Because I’m good at it,” was his reply, feeling his lips quirk into a smirk at the glare Oikawa sent up at him. That look was quick to lose its edge when the sneaky assistant leaned into Iwaizumi’s personal space, dropping his lanky arms over the officer’s broad shoulders. The seductive smirk that Iwaizumi was sure Oikawa had perfected into an art form curled onto the other man’s lips, the brunet slowly leaning down to brush the next set of words over the shorter man’s grimace.

“I promise that I could make this purchase worth your while.” And despite knowing it was simply a tactic, the officer felt his body react. Feeling the warmth of Oikawa’s body against his own was hard to ignore, and the officer let his eyes linger too long on the pale lips before focusing back on Oikawa’s smug gaze.

“I should arrest you for sexual harassment,” Iwaizumi threatened weakly, though a shift in Oikawa’s gaze proved it had the opposite intention.

“Promise to bring your handcuffs?”

“You’re a bastard.” But the words were weak, knowing that his mouth was descending onto the offer too good to resist. The giggle that snuck between their lips during the kiss made Iwaizumi growl, deepening the connection to try and quell the annoying noise. Their mouths felt magnetic, seeming to find each other despite the conversation happening before. It was a rare feeling for Iwaizumi, who didn’t kiss people without establishing a relationship. Oikawa was still unclear waters, but there was a good feeling that clawed through his chest when slipping his arm around Oikawa’s waist, pulling the man flush against him. If the assistant minded, he didn’t show it, simply carding his fingers through the hair on the nape of Iwaizumi’s neck. Before the kiss could linger too long, a loud cough caught the officer’s attention. Yanking back to investigate their surroundings, the shorter man felt his modesty rise when seeing the old lady now glaring at them while she passed.

“Looks like someone is jealous.” The smug tone of Oikawa’s response snapped Iwaizumi’s attention back to him, giving him a glare before dragging the happy assistant to the end of the aisle. The burst of laughter that came from his date didn’t help the red of the officer’s face.
“Will you shut up?” The growled question didn’t stop Oikawa’s giggles, distracting the cop enough to bump into someone else’s shopping cart. Swearing, Iwaizumi turned his attention back to the man pushing the cart, hoping his voice didn’t show his anger toward his date. “Sorry about that.”

“Don’t worry about it.” Still having an arm wrapped around Oikawa’s waist made it easy to feel the tenseness that took over the assistant’s body. The other shopper also seemed to notice the movement, though a blink of the man’s eyes showed more surprise than confusion. “Tooru?”

“Fuck.” The whispered swear coming from the brunet was lacking any of his normal bravado, though Oikawa was quick to cover it with a loud laugh and a cheerful smile. “Oh, hi!”

“How...are you?” It didn’t take detective instincts to feel the immediate tension between the two men, but the officer didn’t want to jump to any conclusions. He knew Oikawa’s track record, and it was likely that they would bump into someone that he slept with. Still, his arm tightened around the other man’s waist, feeling a weird desire to keep Oikawa close even as the man shrugged.

“Besides being a co-owner of the biggest wedding venue in the state and currently on a date with police officer Iwaizumi, who I met at my wonderful job? Pretty fucking great.” Though Oikawa was always confident in his skills, the edge of bitterness the stuck to the end of his sentence struck differently than most of his claims of greatness. It felt less like he was confident in his words, and more that he needed them to be true. While Iwaizumi was sure that Oikawa did enjoy his place of work, the need to show off how great it was seemed phony. Oikawa preferred to give credit to Suga when it came to the company, taking all the glory with his wedding dress designs.

“You’re still there. I thought-” The man stopped himself mid-sentence, and Iwaizumi noticed the hint of wince under Oikawa’s eye as the man rubbed the back of his neck. “I guess I should have known.”

“Yeah, probably.” A flicker from the brown eyes to behind the man was filled with a look of sadness, his voice lowering for only the two men beside him to hear. “But I should have known, as well.”

“Honey?” When a fourth voice entered the conversation, Iwaizumi glanced over at the woman now walking over to place the gallon of milk into the man’s cart. Bright green eyes looked over at them, lacking any knowledge of who they were as she gave a curious look. “Oh, I’m sorry. Did I interrupt anything?”
“We hit into your husband’s cart. Our fault!” A smile cast itself over Oikawa’s face as he leaned closer to Iwaizumi, but the officer still felt the tense back against his forearm. “Can we go, Iwa-chan?”

“Uh, yeah.”

Unsure of what to make of the information he had, Iwaizumi turned their cart into the next aisle, waiting for Oikawa to shake off his happy demeanor to spill about their bump-in. But the assistant remained silent, keeping his quirkiness to a minimum as the two left the grocery store. The weird silence lasted through the car ride to Iwaizumi’s, the only noise in the car coming from the lowered radio. Though the officer was known for telling the wedding worker to shut up, the sudden compliance with the order felt wrong. Even as Iwaizumi led his companion to his apartment, Oikawa stayed quiet. Nudging the door open with his shoulder, Iwaizumi carried the groceries from his car into the kitchen, speaking over his shoulder as he dropped the bags onto the counter.

“Just leave your shoes by the-” His words were cut off by warmth pressed to his back and hands skimming under his shirt, Oikawa’s fingers quick to yank at the belt that kept his pants up. His eyes narrowed on the movements in front of him, his voice booking with intentional threat. “What the hell are you doing?”

“Getting you naked, obviously.” There was a playfulness in Oikawa’s voice, but Iwaizumi instantly noticed the deviation from his normal tone. This felt different than the man he had traded words with in the cereal aisle or at the bar. Maybe closer to the one he had met the first time touring the venue when he barely knew Oikawa. For a moment, he wondered when he had started to be able to notice the difference between the two but shook it off to focus on the current situation.

“Knock it off. This is a date, not a fuckfest.” But his words seemed to fall on deaf ears, Oikawa’s hand sneaking beneath the waistband of his pants to cup Iwaizumi’s groin. His body jumped at the touch, the officer mentally cursing at his lack of control before turning his head to glare back at Oikawa. The assistant gave a wicked grin before squeezing the arousal in his hand, making it twitch from the attention.

“Someone’s happy to see me. So why don’t we skip the dinner and head straight for the bedroom?” The brunet dipped down to kiss Iwaizumi, but the officer was quicker. The sudden headbutt from Iwaizumi seemed to stun Oikawa, who yelped in pain before yanking away from the shorter man’s body. Turning to face the man now blinking back tears and rubbing his forehead, Iwaizumi didn’t bother to re-do his belt while he crossed his arms over his chest.

“Yeah, well, he’s gonna have to wait until we talk about what just happened.”
“That hurt, Iwa-chan!” It was strange to feel a sense of relief at hearing Oikawa’s whiny voice, but it eased something in Iwaizumi’s chest. Rolling his eyes at the dramatics of the man, the officer leaned back against his counter and stared at his date with a look that implied he had no room for games.

“Who was he?” The sentence didn’t seem to catch Oikawa’s full attention, but the emergence of tense shoulders proved that the assistant had heard him. Not willing to play dumb, Iwaizumi pressed the conversation forward. “And don’t give me no shit about him being one of your little wedding fucks, because I can tell the difference.”

“...Why do you care?” Finally moving his hand away from his forehead, Oikawa turned his gaze back to Iwaizumi, a slight glare edging the sides of his pretty brown eyes. “In fact, why are you trying to cook me dinner? Or ask me on a date? Why bother? Because in case you haven’t noticed, I’m not the ‘dating’ kind.”

“Funny, this wasn’t a problem before we bumped into that guy at the store.” He felt his own anger starting to rise at Oikawa’s shrug, the man casually glancing at the disheveled half of the officer’s outfit.

“We both know how this is going to end, and it isn’t with a white picket fence and a dog named Fido.” The strange statement caught Iwaizumi’s interest, his instincts quick to pick up on the familiar sound of bitterness from the grocery store. But the moment of distraction left time for Oikawa to approach the shorter man, pressing his hips back into Iwaizumi’s sensitive body. Lips were grazed against the officer’s neck, Oikawa slowly shifting his hips into his Iwaizumi. “So why don’t you just let me do what I do best?”

“If you mean flap your gums, then sure.” He had to grit his teeth not to react to the man in front of him, keeping his eyes serious when pushing the other man away. “And let’s start that talk with the man we bumped into at the store.”

“Why would you want to talk about him?!” It was rare for Oikawa to raise his voice, and it seemed to catch both of them off guard. Seeming to realize his mistake, the assistant’s eyes widened, Oikawa quick to pull away from the officer. The laugh that entered the air between them was forced, and Oikawa brushed his hair away from his face before turning toward the front door. “I-this was fun, Iwa-chan, but now I’m bored. I’ll see myself-”

“His wife didn’t know you.” The statement made Oikawa’s feet pause mid-step, Iwaizumi narrowing his eyes on the man’s back in front of him. “And you didn’t seem keen on telling her. Why was that?”
“...If I said that I was the dirty little secret of a married man, would that make you more inclined to simply sleep with me?”

“Not really,” Iwaizumi answered honestly, shrugging his shoulders despite knowing Oikawa couldn’t see him. “But I don’t think that’s what happened.”

“Why not? I’m not exactly the moral compass of my little team. I like to have fun, not save drowning puppies and donate to orphanages.” Oikawa’s laugh was strained, and upon closer inspection, Iwaizumi noticed the quiver of the shoulders in front of him. Scowling, the officer moved closer, pressing his hand to the other man’s back.

“Because you’re a pain in the ass, sure, but not a homewrecker. Suga wouldn’t keep someone on his team who would do that.”

“Suga-kun...doesn’t know everything about me.”

“Like what?” Finally, after a pause that felt charged with unspoken energy, the assistant turned back to face Iwaizumi, the hint of tears collecting in the corner of his eyes while he scoffed.

“Since you must know, Iwa-chan, that was my ex-fiance.” Oikawa tried to act like tears weren’t filling his eyes as he rolled them, dropping his gaze to his shirt as he tried to brush the invisible dirt off of it. “The one who I stupidly thought I was going to have the perfect world with until reality came and reminded me that wasn’t my plan for life. He’s a lot uglier than he was when I was with him; I think he’s gained some weight.”

“What happened?”

“Probably ate too much McDonald’s.” Iwaizumi tried to keep his cool at the sarcastic answer when seeing the first tear slide down Oikawa’s face.

“I meant, why didn’t you get married?” This question seemed harder for Oikawa to digest, the assistant continuing to shed tears despite his look of indifference.

“He wanted me to quit Little Crows and I didn’t want to.” Finally acknowledging his crying, Oikawa wiped his face with the backs of his fingers, flinging the water away like a pest he couldn’t be bothered with. “He thought I was spending too much time with Suga-kun, and he had it in his
head that I was cheating on him. The truth was, Suga-kun was in over his head with the business and needed my help. And after his parents died….anyways, I told my ex that I wasn’t going to quit my job. What man doesn’t need his independence, after all? He then told me that so long as I worked here, I wasn’t ‘the kind of many someones would marry’. He broke off the engagement and I hid the whole thing from Suga-kun. Years later, and he still doesn’t know the truth.”

“Why would you hide it from your best friend?”

“Because he would have felt guilty about it, and the man had enough burden on his shoulders as it was. I wasn’t going to let him hurt any more than he had to.” He spoke about his protectiveness like it was common knowledge, Oikawa blinking a few times to try and stop himself from crying. “I told him the guy was just a fling I had going on, and that I wasn’t interested in a real relationship. That’s when I started having sex with people in the wedding. That way, nobody got hurt or had expectations higher than they should.”

“Like you?” Oikawa’s eyes widened as he glanced over to Iwaizumi, who didn’t hesitate to cup his cheeks in his hands and stare up at the man in front of him. “Do you actually believe what that guy told you?”

“It’s…easier if I do, don’t you think?” The lackluster answer made Iwaizumi glare, his scowl fierce as he leaned up and headbutted Oikawa again. The assistant tried to pull back with a hiss, though Iwaizumi’s hands kept his face close. “Ow!”

“Shut up.” This time when he pulled their faces together, it was for a kiss. The aggression that he felt kissing Oikawa made him grasp the other’s face tightly, only holding the intimate moment before pulling back to stare up at the confused face in front of his.

“Iwa-”

“Listen here, Shittykawa. You’re gonna meet someone who finds your independence sexy as hell. Someone who likes that you have passion and that you’re not afraid to work every day for what to want. And even though you’re beyond frustrating on your best days, they’ll want you forever anyway. Who knows if they’ll want a picket fence or some stupid dog. Sugar’s just as big of a pain in the ass as you, anyway. But they’ll want you, and that’s all that matters. Then they’ll marry the hell out of you. And anyone who tells you that you’re not good enough to marry is a fucking idiot. You got that?”

“Ye-Yes!” Oikawa chirped out instantly, Iwaizumi blowing out a puff of hot air before he nodded.
“Okay. So now that we’ve cleared that up, can we get on with our date?” The question made the taller man blink, his lips tightening before they started to wobble in a way the made Iwaizumi’s eyebrow raise. “What now?”

“...S-Stupid Iwa-chan. You’re so...s-so...” The break in Oikawa’s composure came swiftly, the officer catching the man who fell against his chest. Blinking at the crying mess in his arms, Iwaizumi glanced down to his shoulder, which the assistant was using as his personal kleenex. The tears that fell this time didn’t have the same composure as before, Oikawa’s fingers grasping into the man’s shirt like it was a lifeline. And despite the obvious cries coming from the assistant’s mouth, it wasn’t pain that was being expressed. It was relief. Had anyone ever told Oikawa that he was worthy of being loved for more than his body? Something that seemed so obvious to Iwaizumi must have felt impossible to the man now wiping snot on the sleeve of his shirt. Silently he sighed, his eyes glancing up at the ceiling while his arms tightened their hold around Oikawa.

“You’re such a handful,” he muttered quietly, leaning his temple against the back of Oikawa’s head. Despite the statement, he couldn’t help his smile at the nasally ‘meanie’ that squeaked out between the other man’s sobs.

And maybe, just for a moment, he didn’t hate the idea of keeping this handful as his own.

Chapter End Notes

Lots of feels and lots of love to be passed around. Happy to give these pairings a little more attention. So, with the story coming to a close, how will Kageyama and Hinata's date go? How about Tsukishima and Yamaguchi? And will any more twists and turns come up for Suga and Daichi? Find out soon, leave kudos and comments! ^.^

Next Chapter: Someone Like You
Someone Like You

Chapter Summary

Kageyama gets advice, Hinata questions his new life, and Yamaguchi learns something valuable about Tsukishima

Chapter Notes

Ahhh it's a day late! I'm sorry about that! Hope you still like it regardless

Warning: SMUT SMUT SMUT SMUT

“You’re never going to get laid with that shirt.” Oikawa’s blunt words made Kageyama glare, his cheeks bright pink as he tried his best not to storm out of the tailor’s office. He didn’t know why he was standing on the podium normally used for their customers, or how he had gotten himself into this mess to begin with. None of the members of ‘Little Crows’ were supposed to know about his date with Hinata. It wasn’t that he was trying to keep it a secret, per say, but the topic just never came up in conversation. Now, as he scowled at the infuriating man in front of him, he knew that the information had been slipped somehow.

“Be nice, Tooru.” Suga’s calming voice did little to soothe Kageyama’s irritation, though he was grateful for the other man’s presence.

“Yeah, can’t be overloading our little chef with sex hormones; the shrimp was barely able to kiss him, let alone let him go all the way.” He couldn’t say he felt the same relief for Kuroo, who grinned while he relaxed on the long sofa in the back of the room. Kageyama tried to ignore his mortification by tugging on his shirt, staring down at the ground while Suga chastised the man in the background. It was weird to be standing in front of the three older men. He knew that they meant well, as Suga always had his best intentions in mind. The other two were questionable, and Kageyama kept his eye on the brunet who was now walking toward him with a contemplative look.

“You’ve got a good body, Tobio-kun; we need something that shows that off.”

“There’s more to a date than what you look like,” Suga argued, his smile kind as he directed his gaze toward the young man. “We want you to be comfortable.”
“It’s just the dumbass,” Kageyama muttered quietly, though he awkwardly pulled off the top when Oikawa motioned for the piece of clothing. His hair fluttered around his ears from the bottom of the t-shirt, his eyes blinking a few times when another piece of fabric was tossed into his face.

“It doesn’t matter who the person you’re going out with is; you want to give a good first impression. Dates are sort of like job interviews; if you don’t put out your best on the first one, you’re probably not going to get a second call.” It was weird to admit that the tailor was making sense, and Kageyama struggled to get into the new piece of clothing while Oikawa continued. “Since your personality is...lacking, we need to make the outer appearance more appealing.”

“Is that my shirt?” Kuroo’s question came after Kageyama popped his head out from the collar, pulling the soft fabric down his stomach to reassure the shirt would fit. The photographer was taller than him by a few inches, but the two had similar body builds. Kuroo tended to wear his shirts a little more snug that Kageyama, and the baker tugged on the bottom of the shirt when realizing the cloth was pressed closer to his stomach that he was used to. Oikawa didn’t seem to notice the movement, his eyes glowing with accomplishment as he clasped his hands next to his head.

“Perfect!”

“It does look good,” Suga confirmed, giving a reassuring smile to Kageyama before he stepped closer. “And don’t listen to Tooru; your personality isn’t a drawback. Shouyou enjoys your company just fine.”

“Thank you.” Kageyama mentally cursed for stuttering over such a simple compliment, but it was more common than he liked to admit. The baker wasn’t used to the situation he was currently in; he spent most of his time alone, whether in the kitchen baking or at his apartment. That meant he didn’t spend a lot of time on his choices in clothing. He wore basic black attire to work, and he felt most comfortable in sweatpants at home. Coming up with ‘date attire’ was hard. And though he had tried to downplay the nerves that he was feeling over meeting up with Hinata, there had been a reason he hadn’t fought Oikawa when the tailor had grabbed his arm and dragged him into his office. Despite struggling to ever admit he may be in over his head, this case seemed to be the one where he was closest to admitting defeat.

“I think I outdid myself this time.” The assistant seemed pleased with his work, walking around Kageyama to ‘inspect’. “Everything looks good together, and it compliments your gangly shape. Even I might give you a second glance; you know, if I didn’t know you personally.”

“You put the clothes together; leave the pep talk to me.” Suga’s comment made Tooru pout, the owner of the venue laughing while he patted his friend on the shoulder.
“Question.” Kuroo’s voice caught the group’s attention, the photographer sitting up slow on the couch before continuing. “Where is our little baker taking his date tonight, anyway?”

“Oh, good point.” Suga turned back to Kageyama, tapping his cheek as a look of corner washed over his face. “Wherever he goes may determine if the look is appropriate.”

“It better not be Chuck E Cheese; I didn’t just spend a half hour dressing you for greasy pizza and ski-ball.” Though a smile graced Oikawa’s lips, the gleam in his eyes proved that he meant the threat. Kageyama blinked slowly at the stares sent his way, and it took him a moment to realize they were waiting for his answer.

“It’s his birthday; why would I plan it?” He didn’t think his question would cause such a reaction from his group, with Kuroo bursting into laughter, Oikawa smacking his forehead with his hand, and Suga giving a sympathetic look before stepping closer to Kageyama.

“You were the one who asked Shouyou on the date, right?”

“Yes?”

“Well, that normally means that it’s up to you to actually plan something.” It was obvious that the leader of the group was trying to be gentle in his explanation, though Oikawa didn’t seem to have time to mince nice words.

“If you don’t have a date planned, Shrimp-chan is going to assume that you didn’t put any effort into this date. Did you even tell him if it was a dinner date? If not, that’s another strike against you.”

“We-Well how was I supposed to know that?” Kageyama snapped out, glaring to try and hide his slight embarrassment. Kuroo was no help, the man falling off the couch from how hard he was laughing. The whole thing felt close to exploding, and Kageyama’s hands twitched with the desire to call Hinata and cancel. Why had he thought taking the guy out on a date was a good idea? Even if they had obvious chemistry, the baker was not the type to date. His experience with going out with people was very limited, and trying to have an actual relationship with someone seemed hopeless. He was going to ruin Hinata’s birthday all over again.

“Don’t worry, we’re not going to let your first real date with Shouyou go to ruin.” Suga didn’t
hesitate to glance back to his assistant, his hands falling on his hips. “Isn’t there a code of some sort for when a co-worker is in dire need of help?”

“Obviously, though a code Lavender normally only applies to wedding responsibilities.”

“Well, can we...amend the codes to include outside problems, as well?” It was obvious that Suga’s questions lacked his full understanding of Oikawa’s code book, but the tailor didn’t seem to care. Instead, brown eyes sparkled with joy as the assistant ran over to his boss, Kageyama flinching when the tailor jumped onto the wedding planner and hugged him.

“Oh, Suga-kun, I thought you’d never ask about my codes! Of course I’ll modify the code for you.”

“That’s perfect, Tooru, cause we could really use your help right now.” Suga’s hand awkwardly patted his friend’s back before Oikawa pulled back, Kageyama noticing the professional look taking over the older man’s face.

“I’m on it.” Then he turned to the photographer, who was finally pulling himself off the floor. “Kuroo, are the lights from the Cardoza wedding still up in the gazebo?”

“I think Yamaguchi was planning on taking them down tonight.”

“Go stop him, and set up one of those nice sea-glass tables we used in the mermaid wedding. See if Yamaguchi has any of the centerpieces left over that we can use to spruce the table up a bit. We need to set the ambiance just right. And set it up for two people to dine at.” Despite Oikawa not being the boss of him, Kuroo didn’t put up a fight, simply nodding before he casually strolled out of the office. Once seeing the first step of action going into play, the brunet turned back to Suga, his head tilting. “Suga-kun, when you set up the food preparations, you ask about allergies of the wedding party, right?”

“Yup, and from what I remember, the only one with allergies was Tanaka. Though I’m pretty sure he just hates broccoli,” Suga asked, giggling as he sent a wink to Kageyama.

“Perfect! Then, would you mind manning the kitchen? I’ll never turn down food in bed, but I’m not the best at making full course dinners.”
“I think I could make something before the date. Any preferences, Kageyama?”

“I’m not picky,” was the younger man’s answer, though he took the opportunity to speak up about the situation.

“You’re going to cook for us?”

“Yup.” Suga nodded for emphasis, and Kageyama felt his nerves flutter.

“You don’t have to do this-”

“Of course we do.” Oikawa interrupted Kageyama instantly, his eyes rolling as he pouted in a way that didn’t lower his beauty. “You’re our hopeless little baker, Tobio-kun. Your future with chibi-kun is dependent on us making you look like a rockstar. Without our help, you’ll be a fish out of water in seconds.”

“What I think Tooru is trying to say is that we want to help you.” Suga gave a warm smile to Kageyama, his words lacking any hint of hidden agenda as he spoke. “We know we don’t have to do this. But we will. If we can support you by stringing up some lights and cooking dinner for your date, we’ll do it. You aren’t just a coworker; you’re our family. Plus, I think someone feels a little guilty about giving a drunk Shouyou some unsupportive advice-”

“Suga-kun!” Kageyama blinked at the rare hint of modesty crossing Oikawa’s face as the man pushed away from the laughing owner, his scowl apparent before he turned away from the two and stormed to the exit of his office. “I have no idea what you’re talking about. Now, I’m going to visit Kenma to see if he has any tracks for us to play in the speakers of the gazebo. You better go get dinner ready.”

“Right behind you, Tooru.” Suga waited until the assistant left the room to turn back to Kageyama, and the baker noticed a mischievous smile tugging at the edges of his boss’s lips. “I wasn’t supposed to tell you that last part, but he really does feel like that fight you and Shouyou had was partly his fault. That’s why he was so adamant about helping you dress nicely for your date.”

“That...is surprising,” Kageyama admitted, Suga shrugging before the two walked out of the office.

“He’s not a bad person; Tooru just has some...interesting ways of handling things.” Suga then
glanced at his watch, reading the time before continuing. “I should go get dinner ready now. Wouldn’t want to be late for your date.”

“Yeah, I guess.” The baker was quiet as Suga started to walk away, though a sudden need to speak had him calling out to Suga. “Suga-san!”

“Hm?” The older man peeked back at Kageyama over his shoulder, and the baker hesitated before he forced out his quiet sentence.

“I think of this as my family, too.” His eyes were cast away and his words had a weird edge on them, but the younger man hoped that his boss knew the thought was genuine.

“I’m happy to hear that, Tobio.” From the sound of contentment in Suga’s response before he walked away, it seemed he did. Kageyama let out a slow breath before glancing to the sinking sun outside, knowing he didn’t have long until Hinata would be there. He quickly jogged down the stairs, his thoughts running fast through his mind.

He just hoped the date would be enough to leave a lasting impression.

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Hinata had to admit that he had been a little nervous driving to Little Crows the evening of his birthday. Little communication had been transpiring between him and Kageyama throughout the day, and the teacher had worried his date would back out last minute. Though he had enjoyed the mini celebration that his classroom had surprised him with, Hinata had been more than a little distracted throughout the day. The kiss that the two had shared in their previous meeting was still fresh in his mind even if it had been days ago. Though it had taken them months to finally get on the same track, it seemed like both men were finally on board to see where these feelings would take them.

It was still a little weird for Hinata to wrap his head around. Though his friends had been more than accepting of his interest in Kageyama, it was still taking some adjusting to get used to. He enjoyed kissing the baker a lot. He wouldn’t mind spending his whole birthday doing that exact thing. But when he thought about anything more than that, the man got nervous. Curiosity had driven the man into looking up exactly what came after kissing when in a gay relationship, and the results had been enough to slam his laptop shut in terror.
The over-the-top porn wasn’t what worried him; it was just as campy as straight porn. But the real-life stories of instances where things went terribly wrong did scare him. Trips to the hospital and people having to get reconstructive surgeries on parts of the body Hinata didn’t want to think about had been more than enough to rattle the teacher’s cage. And though he had been assured by Noya and Tanaka that these cases were unlikely, it didn’t stop the man from slightly panicking. From what he had gathered, Kageyama hadn’t ‘gone the distance’ with anyone either. They were both new in this department, and that concept made Hinata more nervous than he wanted to admit. What if Kageyama expected something sexual to happen after the date? Would he want to take it slow, or would he just want to get sex out of the way? He doubted the later, as it had taken them months to even muster up the right ambiance for a kiss. But somewhere down the line, sex was going to be brought up, and it left Hinata feeling unsure of what to make of it.

“You’re late, again.” The disapproving look on Kageyama’s face didn’t faze Hinata, who grinned and gave a friendly wave while running up the stairs of the venue.

“It’s my birthday, which means I’m allowed to be late.”

“Since when is that a thing?” Hinata shrugged in reply, not wanting to waste time on the argument.

“So what are we doing for my birthday?” Because throughout their small amounts of contact, Kageyama hadn’t actually told him what the plan was. He peered up at the man who scowled at the question before blue eyes drifted toward the back of the venue.

“Come with me.” His voice was gruff, but Hinata didn’t let his tone lower his own mood. The teacher hummed as he walked followed his date, his lips tugging into a grin again when thinking over the title. This was an actual date, not a forced obligation like before. Even though Kageyama had been willing to come to the party, he hadn’t stayed long, and Hinata felt that made this instance special. There was a low flutter of butterflies in his stomach, which he couldn’t remember the last time he felt from someone else.

The sky was still a low orange from the prolonged summer daytime, casting a pretty glow on the green grass of the venue’s back area. Amber eyes widened as Hinata paused in his walking, his gasp audible as he stared at the pretty scenery in front of him. Low lights wrapped around the white wood of the gazebo, dangling from the ceiling like stars. The stairs were draped with a red velvet, which matched the roses in the intricate centerpiece sitting on the table. Two chairs were draped with a white cloth, a pretty red bow tied loosely around the back of them, and the floor of the gazebo was glowing from the candles. Everything looked ethereal, like Hinata had stepped into a fairy tale. Quickly he let his eyes dart over to Kageyama, who looked uncomfortable standing at the start of the red carpet.

“This is for me?” Hinata asked quietly, his heart pounding in his chest when Kageyama nodded
silently. Eager to investigate the area, Hinata rushed forward, grabbing the baker’s hand in his own as he passed. “Let’s go check it out!”

“Be careful, idiot!” But Kageyama didn’t fight the hold, allowing Hinata to pull him up the stairs. He stopped at the edge of the last step, his excitement growing as he took in the sight. The silverware set up was pristine, and he could see his own reflection in the pretty wine glasses set up in front of the china plates. He couldn’t remember the last time that he had actually eaten on something not made out of plastic or paper. It felt mature, and only solidified that this was, in fact, a date. Eyes glanced back to the date who teetered between the steps below Hinata, and it was then that the teacher noticed a pretty pink blush glowing in the candlelight.

“If this is what you guys do for a dinner date, Noya’s wedding is going to be so...so whoosh!”

“The setup was Yamaguchi and Kuroo-san’s doing,” Kageyama explained quietly, Hinata grinning while tugging the baker up the rest of the stairs.

“Obviously; you would have burned the place down.” Kageyama sent a glare before he smacked the back of Hinata’s head, the older man yelping in protest. “You can’t hit me, I’m the birthday boy!”

“Your birthday doesn’t make you any less of an idiot,” Kageyama replied, showing his first sign of smugness before he walked toward one of the chairs in the gazebo. The dark-haired man hesitated for a moment before he pulled the chair out, his hands seeming to nervously curl around the back of it. Hinata blinked at the motion, his head tilt showing enough of his confusion for Kageyama to huff. “It’s for you to sit in, obviously.”

“Oh, right!” And then Hinata was scampering over, wondering why his chest felt so tight when the taller man quietly pushed him closer to the table. The sensation of being taken care of was strange. He was used to being the man in the relationship, and Iwaizumi would have ripped his ears off if he hadn’t learned the proper way to treat a date. But neither had thought to prepare him for dating another male, which seemed silly now. His feet were bouncing against the floor of the gazebo as he watched Kageyama slowly find his own seat, large hands running through the black bangs of the baker before he glanced back to Hinata.

“Is this...okay?” His words were quiet as he fidgeted in his seat, and seeing the obvious anxiety in his date made Hinata’s grin easy to expose.

“Nobody’s ever thought to treat me to a fancy dinner; most people just assume I only like stuff like laser tag or mini golf or something.” And his confession wasn’t an exaggeration; he enjoyed doing
fun things that require high energy and movement, so people thought that was what he liked doing for dates, as well. And it wasn’t like he hated the idea. But the teacher felt something different about this. Glancing over the dimly lit table, Hinata gave Kageyama a smile he hoped would show his appreciation. “This is pretty sweet.”

“Yeah.” Blue eyes stared down at his plate, and the teacher wondered if the baker was feeling the same nerves as Hinata. The silence that fell between them was stuffy, which felt unlike anything the two had experienced before. When they were together, it was full of insults and quirky energy. But now, the taller man who couldn’t seem to lift his head to face the birthday boy. And Hinata didn’t know what to say to break up the stagnant air.

“Good evening, gentlemen.” A soft voice that was familiar to Hinata entered the gazebo, and Hinata perked up at the newcomer.

“Suga!”

“Happy birthday,” Suga answer, sending a calming smile before he held up a black skillet which Hinata could see steam billowing from the lid. “Sorry for the delay, but your dinner is served.”

“It smells delicious! What did you make?”

“Nothing special.” The skillet was placed between the two, Suga removing the cover as he explained. “It’s a skillet chicken parmesan on top of a grilled spinach bed.”

“That looks so good!” His mouth started to water at the sophisticated meal placed in front of them, his eyes turning back to Suga when a bottle of wine was poured in their glasses.

“I took the liberty of getting you guys some Sauvignon Blanc to pair well with the chicken. I hope you don’t mind, Kageyama.”

“Thank you, Suga-san.” The baker had lifted his head to properly thank the man, and Hinata bounced in his seat from the desire to taste the food, but he tried to be patient. So he stayed quiet, waiting for Suga to place the bottle on the table. He perked up when the wedding planner glanced over at him, giving a gentle wink and a smile that hinted he knew more than Hinata believed.

“If you need anything, make sure to say it, okay?” And then the older man was gone, leaving the
couple in the silence again. Hinata didn’t want to let the silence linger for long, so he took the opportunity to stab his piece of chicken, dragging the cheesy breast onto his plate.

“I didn’t know Suga-san could cook.”

“He’s a genius in the kitchen,” Kageyama replied before scooping spoonful of spinach next to his chicken.

“Are you good at cooking?” Hinata’s question made Kageyama glance up at him in skepticism.

“Why?” The teacher didn’t hesitate to lay out his ulterior motives.

“It’s just, I don’t really know much about you. Well, besides that you make a good cake. And I want to.”

“People…” There was a hesitation in Kageyama’s voice when the man picked at the chicken with his fork, and it lowered when he continued his statement. “They don’t normally want to get to know me.”

“It’s cause you’ve got a scary face.” He snickered when his date sent him a glare, taking a large bite of his chicken now that his stomach didn’t feel so queasy. “But I already got used to it, so we’re fine. That won’t keep me from asking questions. Sure you can be a bit bossy and you think you know it all, and you hit hard-”

“Dumbass-”

“But I like you.” The words felt easy coming from his lips, though the instant blush that crashed against his cheeks made Hinata realize he hadn’t actually said the confession out loud before. He squirmed in his seat when Kageyama’s eyes widened, and his mouth continued to talk about things he hadn’t meant to say. “I really like you. Like, bwah like you. Which is-I mean, I even looked up tips on how to have sex with a guy to make sure I was ready for tonight!”

“Wh-why the hell would you do that?!?” Kageyama’s face was bright red as he shot out the question, only amplifying Hinata’s awkwardness as he waved his arms over his head.
“Well, I wanted to be prepared!”

“Why would that be something to be prepared for?”

“Because we’re on a date?”

“So you think we’d just have se-se-” Hinata would have found it comical that Kageyama couldn’t say the word if not for the fact he wanted the floor to swallow him alive. Why had he said that? It wasn’t like he had expected Kageyama to lean over the table and try to take him there. But his worries about the subject had been swimming through his mind all day; it was bound to come out eventually. He just didn’t want it to be that moment.

“I didn’t really know, I’ve never been out with a guy before and I just didn’t want to mess it up with you,” Hinata confessed, knowing it was pointless to try and hold onto any sort of pride at this point. The admission seemed to catch Kageyama’s attention, who blinked once before he spoke.

“You think I have?” It was the baker’s lack of sarcasm or insult that made the older mean realize he wasn’t exaggerating, a pensive look crossing across Kageyama’s face. “You’re...you’re the only one I’ve actually tried with, idiot.”

“Really?” He didn’t know why he was so excited about the statement, but just hearing it made his stomach flutter and his heart jump around faster than ever before.

“Obviously. So I’m not just trying to just...do it with you. I want more than that. We can figure out the s-sex stuff when we’re ready.” The two stared at each other after the strong statement, though the previous tension and apprehension were dissolved. Everything that was coming out of the conversation felt like a bonus with Hinata, whose face lit up like a little kid as he giggled.

“Kageyama...that was dirty,” Hinata teased, the younger man flushing before he tossed a napkin across the table. Hinata couldn’t stop himself from laughing when his date stabbed his chicken with extra force, little mutterings under his breath colored by the redness of the ears peeking out of black hair. “So, you never did answer me. Do you like cooking?”

“...Not as much as baking.” When the question was answered, it didn’t hold tension, and Hinata jumped on the opportunity to delve deep into a conversation. He did most of the talking, which was normal between the two. Kageyama tossed in his normal complaints or glares, and insults weren’t muted by the romantic ambiance of their food. But Hinata was okay with that, especially when his
date allowed him to hold his hand halfway through dinner. It was weird feeling sturdy fingers instead of a soft touch, but not in the way he thought it’d be. He wanted to know every scar and bump. How they got there, when Kageyama had earned them, and what other secrets man hadn’t shared.

Because being in that moment with Kageyama felt right, and that was something Hinata couldn’t deny.

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Yamaguchi shouldn’t have come.

The party, in the florist’s opinion, was made for people high above his prestige. The number of designer suits, authentic jewelry, and overt signs of wealth made the man squirm in his spot beside the o’dourves table. He could see his dinner date speaking with one of his co-workers on the side in a conversation that Yamaguchi had no right being a part of. It was clear that their lawyer lingo was from experience in the field, and it wasn’t hard to find an excuse of needing another drink to step away from the two men. Now he couldn’t find the desire to go back, nursing the cup of water that had gotten him a weird look from the server when he inquired about non-alcoholic beverages. After the incident at the birthday party, Yamaguchi knew not to drink more than one glass of wine.

His eyes scanned over the luxurious party, wondering why Tsukki considered the event boring. It was stunning, with soft music and lots of food that Yamaguchi couldn’t afford on his best day. A few people were casually swaying on the dancefloor, though it seemed to be more of a formal courtesy than actual desire. From his spot, he could see the pair closest to him speaking, their body language lacking any implication of intimate interest. It seemed that no matter what was going on, whether it was talking, dancing, or simply sharing food, the conversations were rotated around work. The florist could pick out the dates of the lawyers by their unfocused gazes or their constant attachment to their phones. Feeling like having his technology at the formal event would have been rude, Yamaguchi left it in the car (Tsukki’s very expensive car, which had been parked by valet). Now, he was silently wishing he had brought it to text Suga for advice.

To the blond’s credit, Tsukki had tried to stay close throughout the night. Unlike most of the lawyers who didn’t seem to mind leaving their dates at tables to discuss business, his date had kept him by his side. He didn’t make Yamaguchi speak, but allowed the man to give his opinion on topics he felt comfortable discussing. When he spoke, the taller man didn’t shut his opinion down or comment on his lack of knowledge of the situation. Even as he saw the obvious judgment from the others in the area, Tsukki took Yamaguchi seriously, and hadn’t seemed ashamed by his date. The thoughtful care that the lawyer was giving him was the only reason that Yamaguchi hadn’t feinted an illness to get out of the dinner date.
Stirring the straw in his glass, Yamaguchi quietly watched his date’s impassive face at a joke the man beside him said. Though he had found Tsukki attractive in his normal attire, seeing the man in a formal suit was breathtaking. The black slimmed his body, but gave great contrast to the golden stare hidden behind his glasses. The bowtie was snug around his neck, bringing attention to the pale neck that Yamaguchi continued to glance at throughout the night. Cheeks heating under his freckles, the florist dropped his gaze back to his drink. He didn’t want to stare too long, his stomach warming despite his best attempt to keep his thoughts clean. Until tonight, he hadn’t realized the appeal of a well-tailored suit on a man. Now, he shifted again in his spot, though it was to make sure his slight arousal wasn’t showing in the suit he had borrowed from Oikawa’s wardrobe.

“Excuse me?” The florist nearly fumbled his drink at the sweet voice, Yamaguchi looking to his left once gaining control of the glass. He was taken aback by the beautiful woman beside him, and he knew that her pretty face was why some men were glancing at them as they passed. She was petite, and looked to be about the same age as Yamaguchi. He couldn’t remember being introduced to her throughout the night, but that didn’t mean much. The florist had been meeting people since the start of the dinner, and he couldn’t name half of them if asked. But he felt that he would notice the softness of her eyes as she shifted her brown stare toward the table, picking a smoked salmon cucumber roll between her fingers and popping the delicacy into her mouth. The blonde’s maroon lipstick was slightly smudged by the movement, but she didn’t seem to notice as she sent a cheerful smile toward the brunet when she was done. “Have you had one of these? They’re super tasty.”

“O-Oh, I have, thank you.” Then, feeling slightly responsible for the woman, Yamaguchi hesitantly brushed his thumb against the side of his own mouth. “But, uh, your lipstick…”

“Did it smudge? Ah, how embarrassing!” Her face changed colors quickly, and the florist couldn’t stop a slight smile from peeking along the edge of his mouth as she fumbled with the black handbag and her words. “I don’t normally wear this stuff because animals don’t really care if you look good, but my friend said this color of lipstick is in season and would finally catch the attention of Dr.Kiy-I should have known something was going to go horribly wrong-”

“It still looks good, there’s nothing to worry about!” Yamaguchi answered quickly, feeling bad for setting the woman into a panicked tangent. Her short hair swished against the skinny straps of her black dress as he popped a mirror in front of her, hesitating before she turned her pleading eyes back to the florist.

“This is really embarrassing to ask, but could you hold this for me while I fix it? It’ll only take a second!” She bowed her head several times before the brunet could even answer, Yamaguchi hoping to stop the movement by taking the compact from her hand.

“It’s okay, I don’t mind.” He gave her a reassuring smile as the woman’s grateful face popped back up, waiting for the woman to concentrate on her reflection before he continued. “I’m guessing you
work with Tsukishima?"

“Kei-san?” The woman’s casual name-drop didn’t feel as conflicting as Yamaguchi might have thought it would be, the woman giving a quick shake of her head before realizing she had to keep her head still to finish what she was working on. “No, I could never be a lawyer. I’m only at this dinner because the function donates a lot of money to my clinic. I’m a vet, and we rely on companies like this to help support us.”

“I didn’t know other occupations were invited,” Yamaguchi confessed, not knowing much about the event.

“Oh, there’s lots of different people here. The more lawyers, doctors, and other well-paid occupations to come to the event, the more money is shared. And the clinic is always happy to take donations. Oh, I didn’t even introduce myself! I’m Yachi Hitoka.”

“Yamaguchi Tadashi,” he replied, waiting for the woman to pull back from the mirror before he closed it. He handed over the compact with a smile, waiting for her to take it to continue. “I’m not a lawyer, though; just a florist at a wedding venue.”

“Yamaguchi...that name sounds so familiar.” The re-glossed lips of Yachi furrowed as she tapped her forehead, her eyes lighting up when eagerly turning back to Yamaguchi. “Oh! Now it makes sense how you know Kei-chan; Shouyou talked about you. You’re working on Noya-san and Asahi-san’s wedding, right?”

“Well, I’m a part of the company.” For the first time all night, Yamaguchi felt a slight relief at meeting someone who didn’t seem too high maintenance for him. Yachi’s laugh wasn’t held back, and she didn’t care that her giggles caught the unwanted attention of a couple walking by. Instead, her eyes were warm with joy, reaching out to grab his hands in her own.

“It’s a pleasure to meet you, and I’m sorry about the trouble that my best friend may have caused you at his birthday party.”

“It was nothing. I’m used to dealing with extravagant people.” The two shared a smile that meant that they both were the victims of the over-the-top personalities of their friends.

“I can deal with fun people, but being in high tension places like this…” Yachi shivered as if feeling the unsettling feeling through her skin, sending a wary look around the room. “Everyone
here is super intimidating. Normally I try to bring a date with me so I can talk with him or her during the dinner. But some... recent news made me decide to come without one."

“So you don’t know the people here?”

“I know some better than others. I tend to get a little shy,” she admitted weakly, and the florist knew he could relate.

“The only reason I came was because of Tsukki.” The nickname got a giggle from Yachi, and Yamaguchi felt his own face flush at the slip-up. He had been trying to address his date with a formal name in front of others, but he was too relaxed with the blond to keep up the act. “As a favor, because he had nobody else to come with.”

“So it’s really true?” Yachi’s eyes were filled with hope before she seemed to realize her tell, the brown gaze dropping down to the table to snag another o’dourve. “That he finally called off the engagement with Dr.Kiyoko? Shouyou had told me that the other day, but I wasn’t sure if I believed it to be true.”

“They both seemed to agree that the engagement wasn’t the best for them.” Yamaguchi wasn’t sure if he was supposed to be telling Yachi the information, but nothing in her demeanor seemed to show ill feelings toward the news. If anything, the slight pink in her cheeks seemed to lean toward another feeling that Yamaguchi recognized. It was something he had intimate knowledge with, as he had a similar look when he spoke about a certain lawyer. Taking a moment to think of the woman’s previous rambling, one part stuck out to him. “Yachi, do... you know Kiyoko-san personally?”

“Y-Yes.” And on cue, the blush Yachi wore darkened. Yamaguchi could see the way her hands tightened on the handbag and how her eyes moved away from the table to look to their left. Following the hint, Yamaguchi glanced over, surprised to see a familiar face. The doctor who had previously appeared in his greenhouse was just as stunning as she had been then, her black hair pulled into a sophisticated bun. The white gown was form-fitting, but only to accentuate the natural beauty of the woman now surrounded by a few obvious suitors. Despite the attention, she didn’t seem flustered by any of their advances. She looked bored, if Yamaguchi was being honest, though she seemed polite enough to entertain their conversations.

“Are you friends?”

“Us? Fr-Friends? She’s...I do check-ups for her cat, and we just talk on occasion,” Yachi answered, her hand nervously pushing the short strands of hair behind her ear. Seeing the action, the florist
nodded, holding out his hand and giving her a smile.

“We could go say hi now if you want?”

“I couldn’t bother her!” Was the woman’s instantly reply, though the brunet didn’t lower his hand.

“Kiyoko-san was very polite when I met her, and I don’t think she’d consider you a bother. Isn’t it better than sitting over here by yourself?” The question wasn’t met with a verbal answer, and it took a few seconds of indecision from the blonde before she slowly took the hand presented to her. Happy that his new acquaintance gave the green light, Yamaguchi moved forward, the florist passing through the large room and a few confused men before stopping in front of the doctor. “Ah, good evening, Kiyoko-san!”

“Yamaguchi-san?” Pretty blue eyes swept over to greet him, Kiyoko’s smile small as she gave a polite bow to the two in front of her. “And Yachi-san, as well. Good evening.”

“H-Hello!” The slight squeak in the vet’s voice made Yamaguchi squeeze her hand, reassuring her while he turned his full attention to Kiyoko.

“It’s nice to see you again; I’m sorry that things were so complicated the first time we met.”

“I feel I should apologize to you, as well.” The soft-spoken response made Yamaguchi blink, Kiyoko giving a look that implied she knew more than he expected. “I was missing information before I approached your workshop that afternoon. I wanted to let you know that I wasn’t aware of the circumstances at the time, or your relationship with him. I hope you can understand and accept my apology.”

“Of course!” Because in all honesty, he should have been the one who felt bad. Though it was quite obvious the two weren’t romantically compatible, Yamaguchi had been the technical reason their engagement ended. He didn’t know how to openly say that, though, so he allowed the topic to die as he continued. “I’m glad we got to meet again. I wouldn’t have known you were here if not for Yachi-san.”

“I just happened to see you come in earlier!” Was Yachi’s immediate response, though Kiyoko didn’t seem upset by the information. Instead, she turned her attention to the blushing blond, her smile growing more than it had with any of the previous suitors.
“I was hoping to talk to you tonight, as well. I haven’t been able to come to the clinic recently.” If the doctor didn’t know about the vet’s crush, she would now by the obvious red face of Yachi. Yamaguchi wanted to laugh, but he kept it to himself in consideration for his new friend. Before he could say something to rescue the blond, a tug on his wrist made him look to his right, surprised to see his date’s hand pulling his own away from Yachi.

“Excuse the interruption,” Tsukishima started, his eyes only leaving Yamaguchi’s to send a polite glance to the two women beside them. “But I’d like to take my date back, now. I apologize for the intrusion.”

“Oh, o-of course! I’m sorry!”

“It’s no problem, Tsukishima-san.”

“Ts-Tsukki-” But any attempt to complain wasn’t vocalized, the man now being pulled away from the two and through the room. They didn’t stop at their previous table, Tsukishima guiding the florist out of the larger room of the event. They went down a flight of stairs and into an area of the function that was comparable to a ghost town. Yamaguchi wanted to ask about their final destination, but his answer was quickly given when his back was pressed into a wall.

And then, lips were on his. The kiss was unexpected, and Yamaguchi’s face was on fire from the sudden connection, his body tensing in fear of getting caught. The fear didn’t seem to bother his date, who pressed his leg between Yamaguchi’s thighs and stole the breath from the florist. The arousal that had faded from memory when Yachi appeared came spiraling back, and Yamaguchi’s hands grasped onto the back of Tsukishima’s suit to try and steady his world. His mouth was pressed open from the demanding kiss, and the younger man moaned when a firm thigh was rocked into his groin, making the man shiver in pleasure. His nerves were on fire when the skilled tongue teased his own into play, though Yamaguchi knew he was no match for the experienced lawyer. One of his shaky hands grasped at the back of Tsukishima’s neck, seeking support when the lawyer hiked Yamaguchi’s body higher on the wall. His hips rocked with the movement, and the florist had to break the kiss to gasp at the sensation.

“Ts-Tsukki!” He wasn’t sure why he felt desperate to call the other man’s name, but he couldn’t stop himself. The slow roll of the man’s thigh into his arousal was making his body tremble, and Yamaguchi could feel his face flushing from the embarrassment and desire to continue. “The party-we can’t-”

“You can.” When his belt had been undone, Yamaguchi wasn’t sure, but the soft touch against the outside of his boxers made the florist jump and gasp. Everything felt hot in his body, and feeling the skilled lawyer’s mouth skimming his throat when he spoke was making everything in his head fuzzy. “I’ve contained myself long enough tonight.”
“Huh? What are-ah!” Yamaguchi’s spine curled when his hardened length was stroked through his boxers, the freckled man’s thighs trying to part more despite having little access to the floor below him. The sensation was intense, and unlike anything that Yamaguchi had been able to create with his own hand. Eyes squeezed tightly, the florist’s hips tried to rock up into the movement, being rewarded with a faster stroke.

“You do clean up well, flower king.” The teeth that nipped at his pulse had Yamaguchi whimpering, his body shaking from the wave of pleasure inside him. He wanted to deny the claim or speak of how much better his date looked in his suit. But words were failing him, his whole focus zoning in on the smooth jerks of Tsukishima’s hands in his pants. He was gasping with each touch, hips desperate to get closer to the intense sensation. Fingers tingling from the pleasure, Yamaguchi’s head smacked into the wall when the blonde’s thumb brushed his tip roughly through the thin fabric.

“Wa-Wait-” The surge of pleasure cramping his gut had his voice shaking, and he couldn’t warn the other man of the oncoming orgasm. Another slow rub against his tip had Yamaguchi crashing into the pleasure, his whole body tensing in undeniable sensation.

Everything felt hot, and his fingers clenched in the hair at the nape of Tsukishima’s neck as he tried to ride out his orgasm. The hand rubbing his arousal didn’t stop even as he came, and Yamaguchi’s cry of pleasure was quickly echoed into Tsukishima’s mouth when he kissed the florist. Yamaguchi couldn’t focus on the connection, barely giving any return kiss until his body fell limp against the wall behind them. Panting into the wet lips over his, Yamaguchi couldn’t shake the dizzy feeling now buzzing in his head. The orgasm was quick, which may have been embarrassing if it hadn’t felt so amazing. It took him some time to open his eyes, only doing so when Tsukishima lowered him back onto his feet.

“I…” But he didn’t know what to say. He was starting to get his bearings again, hearing the faint music of the upstairs party returning to his ears. His boxers were damp, and he winced when the lawyer pulled his fingers away, realizing that it wouldn’t take long for his release to become a problem.

“There’s a bathroom down the hall; I’ll wait for you here.” As if reading Yamaguchi’s mind, the blond spoke, taking a step back to give the man some space to move. The florist blinked once, then swallowed before he spoke.

“Tsukki? What...why did you-”

“Apparently, I don’t like seeing others touch you so familiarly, even if it is Yachi-san. It’s...a new
development.” Golden eyes were looking to the left as if the conversation was boring, but being close meant that Yamaguchi could see the hint of a blush on his date’s face. It didn’t take much for the florist to realize that Tsukishima was describing jealousy, but he didn’t want to bring the word into the conversation. Still, it made his smile a little brighter as he nodded, the lawyer sighing and crossing his arms. “Hurry up.”

“Right. Sorry, Tsukki.” Grabbing the front of his pants, he shuffled in the direction of the bathroom, trying to hide his happiness as he went. Maybe he wasn’t meant to go to fancy parties or eat expensive food like the rest of the guests.

But he felt like he was meant to be by Tsukki’s side, and that was enough for him.

Chapter End Notes

And that's the end of this chapter! Everything is starting to come to a close. I think there's only like...three chapters left? I think. Either way, make sure to stay tune for the upcoming chapters! Will everyone get a happy ending? Will the wedding turn out as perfect as they want? Or will something get in the way for all of them?

Next Chapter: The Line Between
Holy Crap and Update

Okay, so.

Yeah, it's been a bit...erm, more than a bit. And I know that 99% of the time that means that a fic has been abandoned. And maybe for a bit I did wonder if I'd finish this story.

But news: This story's last chapter will be posted in the next two weeks. I've started figuring out how to write the last part, because I just felt like crap not finishing it and having people worried and there's been a lot of stuff going on in my life between fandom switches, graduate classes, job changes, life changes, and medical illness that I really should have dealt with better.

So this is to let you know that the final chapter of this story will be out by September 17th. Thank you all for your comments and sweet words, I'll try to respond to each one of them before posting the last chapter.

Thank you,
NavyBlueWings
The Line Between

Chapter Summary

It's Noya and Asahi’s wedding day, but all is not well. Will the wedding be called off? Or will love prevail?

Chapter Notes

Welcome to the final chapter of this long story! Again, thank you all for your support and your sweet words. I don't want you to think they weren't heard or that I didn't need to hear them. I'm happy I came back and finished this story, and gave it the proper ending it deserved. So sit back and enjoy this massive 30 page conclusion!

“So, is Azumane pulling his hair out yet?” The gruff voice of his partner had Daichi smiling when he moved onto the back porch of the apartment complex the two shared, watching Iwaizumi lift the beer bottle to his lips for a drink.

“He’s doing a lot better than I thought he would be,” Daichi supplied, receiving a low snort from the other officer.

“How long has it been since Yuu went to Tanaka’s house?”

“So, is Azumane pulling his hair out yet?” The gruff voice of his partner had Daichi smiling when he moved onto the back porch of the apartment complex the two shared, watching Iwaizumi lift the beer bottle to his lips for a drink.

“He’s doing a lot better than I thought he would be,” Daichi supplied, receiving a low snort from the other officer.

“How long has it been since Yuu went to Tanaka’s house?”

“No, our shift is from 10am to 6pm. I’m not sure if we’ll even be home by then.” Daichi frowned, his eyes wandering over the yard as he listened to Iwaizumi’s voice. Though he’d tried to train them in the past, the two amigos had never really stuck. Tanaka and Noya would be late to their own funerals, and nobody who knew them would be surprised.

“Don’t be so sure. Noya isn’t exactly known for being on time for things, either.” It was something that Daichi had tried to train the two amigos to work on, but the lessons had rarely stuck. Tanaka and Noya would be late to their own funerals, and nobody who knew them would be surprised.

“Considering we just rolled in at 3am and have to be at the venue for 10am tomorrow, wasn’t your
brightest plan.” Yet from how casual his friend had replied, Daichi knew he was dealing much better with the fatigue. “Can’t believe this shit’s really happening tomorrow.”

“Time flies by when you’re having fun.” The snort Daichi got in response had him smiling even as he closed his eyes to listen to Iwaizumi’s answer.

“I feel like I’ve been dealing with Shittykawa’s antics for decades. Where’s the fun in that?”

“I didn’t hear you complaining when you went to the movies last week.” Because despite his snark, the cop had been more than open to the tailor’s advances. They’d been on three dates since their ‘shopping incident’ (Oikawa tended to call it “the day Iwa-chan fell for my irresistible charm”, which was always followed up by a slap to the back of the head), though Iwaizumi tended to downplay each one. Still, Daichi couldn’t help the small rumble of pride he felt when seeing his grumpy partner drop his arm over the other man’s waist. Tooru was eccentric, but he wasn’t a bad person. And the younger cop couldn’t remember that last time he’d seen his friend so relaxed.

“And aren’t you going to the vineyards with him next Tuesday? Suga was saying Oikawa had practically broken his office door down to demand the day off.”

“That bastard told me he was free,” Iwaizumi growled, downing the last of his beer before tossing the bottle into the bin. Daichi’s laugh was soft when Sugar returned the ball again, giving her a soft pat on the head before tossing the toy.

“I’m half surprised you believed him.”

“I didn’t until your boyfriend confirmed it.”

“Suga’s...always doing what he thinks is best for the situation.” The smile that grew when thinking of his lover’s sneaky loopholes was instant, knowing he’d fallen victim to the wedding planner’s charm more times than not. It was hard to think of the man as mischievous with the innocent edge his face naturally held. The world was happy that Tooru and Suga used their powers of persuasion for weddings and not something sinister. “He’s probably just trying to get your boyfriend out of his hair for a day in order to get some paperwork done.”

“Who said that moron’s my boyfriend?”

“Well, is he?” The two glanced at each other for a silent moment, Daichi trying not to crack a grin at the eye twitch he received. Though Iwaizumi’s glare was known across the precinct as lethal, working with him for as long as Daichi had simply dulled down its effect.

“You planning on taking Sugawara somewhere soon?” He noticed the change of subject instantly, but respected his friend enough to go in the new direction he’d taken the conversation. After being cheated on and used during his last relationship, it wasn’t hard to think that the bull-headed cop still had some healing scars. The fact that he was even taking the chance of the extravagant assistant was a step in the right direction.

“I haven’t really had time to talk to him about any time off. Maybe when the wedding season slows down.”

“Jesus, listen to us.” Iwaizumi dropped his head to the back of the chair, dark gaze staring at the blackened sky above. “Two cops discussing wedding seasons like it means something. What’s happened here?”

“Just make sure you don’t plan your wedding the same day as us, or there may be a problem with the guest lists.” The joke Daichi tossed out was effortless, yet the frown that grabbed the edges of
Iwaizumi’s mouth had the other officer blinking. “What?”

“You’re talking like you’ve thought about it.”

“About the fact that Tooru would try to stab me for ruining his moment? Don’t really need to be a genius to figure out how that’d go over.”

“I meant about marrying Sugawara.” Iwaizumi’s reply wasn’t what the dark-haired man was expecting, and for a moment it left Daichi stunned. Weddings and Suga were pretty synonymous because of his profession, but getting married?

“We’ve only been talking for a few months.”

“That’s a real sneaky way of avoiding the question, Sawamura.”

“It’s not like I have my vows and a set of rings waiting for him. But I...” Daichi felt Sugar’s wet nose burying into his hand, and he absentmindedly stroked over the dog’s head. Thoughts were slow to fully form, though he excused it from weariness and the time of night. Still, an emotion that felt nothing like panic or doubt settled in his stomach as he spoke. “I wouldn’t be upset if it was Suga I ended up with.”

“Well I already knew that.” A huff from Iwaizumi had Daichi rolling his head to glance at the other man, who seemed far too smug in his declaration. “From the moment I saw you two together, it was obvious. I haven’t seen you smile this much since I met you.”

“I don’t think I’ve ever been happier,” Daichi admitted weakly, enjoying the warmth spreading through his chest. “Maybe it’s just the wedding vibes, but I think I...I don’t know. It’s probably way too late to be thinking about all of this.”

“It’s got to be close to four.” Trying to see if Iwaizumi’s guess was close, Daichi lifted his hips to yank out his phone. The light of the screen hurt, making the officer blink a few times. Once the sting had lessened, he glanced to the time, seeing that it was a few minutes shy of the guess. But what quickly stole his interest was the voicemail notification and the missed call from the precinct. It’d made him curse quietly, and Sugar barked in excitement over the noise. Iwaizumi was sitting up in an instant, attentive to the familiar look. He’d just left the precinct an hour before, and everyone knew that the next day was Asahi’s wedding. Why were they trying to get in touch with him so late into the night? He was tempted to ignore the call, but duty made him press the phone closer to listen to the message.

He barely lets the words enter his ear before he is out of his seat, grabbing the forgotten police jacket off the back of his chair.

“I’ve gotta go to the precinct. Can you bring Sugar in? Great. See you at the wedding.”

“Don’t be late!” Iwaizumi called out, giving a roll of his eyes when turning his attention back to the dog staring at him. A hint of a smirk cracked his lips as he leaned down to pet the white canine, shaking his head. “Your dad’s a hopeless romantic, mutt.”

~*~

“Tooru, is Bokuto set up for the music?” Suga’s eyes skimmed down his checklist as he spoke, a casual voice slow to answer.

“All set. I gave him the list of the requested songs and what time to play them.”
“What’s the status on flowers and pictures?” The owner of the wedding venue lifted his head at the question, making sure the editor knew the question was directed to him. Kenma didn’t turn his attention away from the game in his possession, but his answer came instantly.

“Kuroo is finishing up the pictures of Asahi’s side of the wedding party now. Yamaguchi said he was fixing one of the centerpieces, but the rest was complete.”

“He’s doing the pictures without Daichi?”

“Said he couldn’t wait.” Suga’s lip was caught between his teeth as he pulled his phone out, glancing down at the blank screen. Despite the preparations of the wedding going smoothly, the missing best man was disrupting the calm the wedding planner was known to keep in times of stress. Asahi had surprisingly seemed okay with the news of his missing best man, claiming that he trusted in Daichi not to miss the wedding. Though many things in life set the big man on edge, his trust in his best didn’t seem to waver. For a moment, Suga wished he could borrow that, but quickly dismissed the thought. Keeping his grooms in good space was the most important task of the day, which meant the fretting planner had to shoulder the stress himself.

“Well, since Kuroo’s making nice with Asahi, should we go visit the short stack?” As if knowing of the running ticker of anxiety in Suga’s mind, the eccentric tailor was quick to loop his arm around his friend’s before dragging him away from the waving Kenma. “And if lover boy isn’t here by then, I’ll be leaving some very lovely voicemails on his phone.”

“I just don’t understand why he won’t answer. Daichi never shuts his phone off.”

“Maybe it’s a code screaming green, and they abducted him.” The teasing grin that lifted Tooru’s lips made Suga laugh, leaning closer to his friend despite the shake of his head.

“How do you come up with these codes?”

“Most of them? In the shower.”

“I feel I should worry more about that.” But it had lifted his spirits, so Suga dropped the conversation while knocking on the dressing room door. The loud wedding party hidden behind the wood was quieter than Suga had expected them to be, knowing Hinata and Tanaka could be heard from another country when together. Ennoshita opened the door, giving a strained smile that set off warning bells for the planner.

“Suga-san, thank God you’re here.” A gentle hand pulled him into the room, the quiet groomsman leading him forward while his voice lowered. “I think you need to talk to Noya.”

“What’s the matter?” Instantly, the worry for Daichi was gone, his focus narrowing onto the look crossing the brunet’s face.

“He says he’s fine, but...we all feel it. There’s something wrong. I had to send Hinata and Tanaka to go grab some water because they were freaking out, but Noya’s just getting worse by the minute.” Nerves were normal in people on their wedding day, and the planner was used to talking down the runaway bride. Suga’s eyes took in the grinning groom when he stepped into the dressing area, instantly realizing where the concern came from. He’d worked with the cheery man for months, and he had learned how expressive his bright eyes became in moments of joy. But the nervous twitch in the golden gaze and tensed shoulders showed none of the pleasure his client was known for, and only confirmed Ennoshita’s fears.

“Hey! Are you guys ready to get me hitched?” Even the voice lacked his normal excitement as he
laughed, and Suga tried to give a reassuring smile while nodding.

“Of course, I’m just coming by to make sure you’re doing okay. Need anything from us before we start?” A flinch from the shorter man was only visible if one had been looking for it, and Noya tried to hide it by jumping in place.

“Why would I need anything? Everything I need is gonna be waiting for me at the end of the aisle.”

“Because you look about two seconds away from having a mental breakdown.” The blunt response from Tooru made Suga glare at his partner, but the tailor gave a shrug while continuing. “The worst thing you could do is act fine until the priest asks you the big question, and then leave your hubby high and dry at the altar.”

“I could never do that to Asahi! If anything, he’d-” The sentence had cut off sharply, and Noya sucked in a pained breath. Suga’s heart squeezed when seeing a moment of panic cross his groom’s face, realizing quickly what the situation was.

“Oh, Noya-”

“I’m okay.” The grin was so big, it seemed impossible that the eyes above it were shimmering. But Noya’s tears were dampening his lashes in seconds, and Suga’s feet moved forward when seeing the first one streak down the young man’s face. “I’m okay, really!”

“You’re more than okay; you’re amazing.” Suga’s words were honest when he tried to give a supportive smile, hating the tremble in Noya’s shoulders when he hunched them forwards.

“Then why aren’t my parents here?” The sob that followed the question hurt Suga’s soul. Noya had been so optimistic throughout the process, rarely showing his weakness or fear. Suga rushed forward without thought, pulling the crying man into a hug.

“That’s not your fault.”

“They called me last night,” Noya forced out, face buried in the front of Suga’s shirt. Surprised, the planner stayed silent as his client spoke, feeling each painful word pulse through the man’s tense body. “Told me it wouldn’t last; that a man like Azumane wouldn’t be able to handle me. That it wasn’t too late to make the right choice. And I know he wants to marry me today, but what if...what if they’re right?”

“They aren’t,” Suga answered easily, wishing he’d been there when his ignorant parents had called. Noya nodded weakly, but the planner could tell that the groom was wavering.

“I just want to be with him for the rest of my life, but I don’t want him to regret me. I don’t-Suga, I just wanna be enough for him. But why would someone as beautiful and amazing as Asahi want to marry a short weirdo like me? Nobody would wanna write a love story about us!”

“He would. He loves you, Noya.”

“Or he pities me.” The words were so harsh, Suga instantly knew it hadn’t come from Noya’s mind. He could only wonder what else Noya’s terrible parents had poisoned the unsure man with. Little hands tightened on Suga’s shirt, as if afraid his next words would spurn the planner away. “Maybe Asahi just...feels bad for me. Knows that I’m a handful and cares about me too much to let me down. He never wants to hurt people; if anyone would marry someone out of pity, it’d be Asahi.”
“This isn’t pity or guilt or anything else your terrible parents told you. Anyone who sees you two together knows how in love that man is with you,” Suga soothed, glancing up when hearing a strangled noise behind them. Hinata and Tanaka had returned with water, their faces pale when seeing the short man cry. Before the planner could help calm their fear, Noya broke away from the hug to shake his head.

“It’s not like you and Daichi!”

“Me and...what?” Stunned at the change of pace, Suga blinked while trying to catch onto the meaning under Noya’s word.

“When people look at you two, they know you’re in love! But me and Asahi just look like a freak show.”

For the first time in years, Suga was left speechless. Noya thought he and Daichi were in love? The news made the next breath impossible to catch, and the planner wondered if he’d heard the fretting groom right. Was his client throwing things out just to support his maladaptive thoughts? Had he bumped his head before entering the dressing room? Was this just a stress hallucination from the best man still missing in action? But Suga’s world wasn’t wavering, and as he stared at Noya in shock, he realized the groom truly believed his statement. Words were flickering through his mind like a wavering flame, torn between fading out and bursting to life. The flood of dread and rush of endorphins made choosing which path to follow impossible for the planner, leaving him frozen.

“So what?” Oikawa’s breezy voice broke the tense air with ease, the brunet not hesitating in his gait while giving a shrug. Suga and Noya both looked to the tailor, who glanced at the suit the groom wore before sighing. “Now I’m gonna have to fix you up again. I spent too much time on this for your moment of crazy to ruin it.”

“Tooru,” Suga protested weakly, hating the waver in his voice. The partner ignored it, yanking at the jacket of Noya’s suit before speaking again.

“When I first saw you and beanstalk’s photo, I laughed. You’re a midget and he punches holes in ceilings with his head. Course I laughed. And then I met you two and realized ‘oh god they’re that sappy love’. You know, the kind that rots your teeth because they look at each other like the world can only orbit if the other is breathing.” Oikawa made a point to scrunch his nose, smoothing out the vest of the hopeful groom in front of him. “It’s disgusting how head over heels you two are; I couldn’t imagine anyone else making Asahi smile the way you do. So yeah, people judge, but you don’t love the gentle giant because other people told you to, right? You love him because he’s the one for you. And the same goes for him. It’s that simple; don’t make it complicated.”

“Woah.” Tanaka’s stunned voiced proved that nobody expected the words to come from Tooru, who now glanced down at his nails in mild interest.

“I may not be Cupid, but I know a code red when I see one.”

“A code red?” Hinata asked, his eyes owlish while blinking.

“Yup. The most important code of them all.”

If Suga was being honest, he’d heard his friend occasionally throw out the saying in passing during weddings. He’d never been focused on it, as the warning was random and didn’t connect with any disastrous event. Sometimes, it didn’t sound like Oikawa was trying to announce the code at all, only whispering to himself. Tooru tended to make a show of the colors and their meanings. The code red had been the only exception. But there was a strange tint to the tailor’s eye as he glanced
“Code red means that two people are truly in love.” Then the brown eyes were back on Noya, patting the shoulders once before clapping his hands together. “And you two are definitely a code red. I’ve seen enough duds to know.”

“Oikawa!” The brunet let out an unattractive squawk when Noya jumped on him, nearly knocking the two over. Slender arms flailed out in protest of the hug, but the deterring movement didn’t stop Tanaka and Hinata from jumping into action.

“Group hug!” They chanted while diving in, latching onto any available limb to increase the hug. Suga couldn’t help the laugh that spilled from his lips, amused at the horror etched on Tooru’s face.

“Get off of me, I’m allergic to sweetness! I’m going to break out into hives and I will send you my dermatology bill.”

“I’ll leave you to taking care of these guys, Tooru.” The glare he received could have lit his silver hair on fire from rage, but Suga smiled sweetly before excusing himself from the room. The quick exit didn’t stop the uneasy clenching in his stomach as he rushed through the halls, passing easy smiles to guests of the wedding and workers alike as he moved. He needed to get the ceremony prepared, and Asahi’s group had to be transitioned to their positions. He’d done this hundreds of times throughout the years, and yet his brain couldn’t focus. Because Noya had thought Daichi loved Suga, something that had never crossed the wedding planner’s mind.

For a moment, his mind flashed to his parents. Never once had he questioned if the two loved each other; it had been obvious to anyone that was in their presence for more than a second. They were teased by friends as the ‘honeymoon couple’, and even as a child, Suga wondered if he’d ever find love as rich as theirs. Troubled relationships and hardships in life had made reality kick in, recognizing their bond was improbable. It’d been why, in the end, he’d married his job instead. Suga had been content with the acceptance that he’d never find a man who made him feel as complete as his parents had been. But that had been before Daichi. Before the cat-and-mouse, before the gentle kiss on the stairs. Before his house had been ransacked and Suga had been stripped of every sense of security he’d had. Before he’d learned what it felt like to be held by Daichi, to feel Daichi inside him, to see his gentle smile in the moments of their afterglow. Suga now craved something that Noya had hinted may already be there.

And the thought terrified him.

“Suga?” The voice startled the planner, nearly jumping into the side table before a strong hand steadied his back. Glancing up at the best man, Suga’s chest constricted at the familiar eyes watching him in concern. “You okay? You were spacing out there.”

“Where have you been?” Are you in love with me? Suga’s mind was whirling as he bit his tongue to keep the words from spilling out, staring at the sheepish smile that crept over Daichi’s lips when he laughed.

“I had to go into work; open investigation was about to close and they needed my signature for the release of the evidence. I was going to call you, but my phone died and I let Tanaka borrow my car charger last week. Why, did something happen?”

“Uh…” Suga’s eyes flickered down the man in front of him, cheeks flushing red at the sight. Though most of the wedding partied filled out a suit well, Daichi stole the show. His body was made for the designer attire, thighs framed like a picture in the dark fabric. It was unprofessional to
imagine those pants on Suga’s floor, but the reminder that the cop was his boyfriend made some of the guilt dissolve. There was a softer chuckle near his ear that lifted Suga’s head, catching the amused look from the taller man. It was a beautiful sight, and Suga’s chest filled with the previous anxiety he’d experienced in the dressing room. Refusing to admit why his palms were starting to sweat, Suga tried to think of the question he’d yet to answer. “A minor bump with Noya, but Tooru handled it well.”

“You sure? You seem off.” A warm hand pressed to his cheek, the worry obvious on Daichi’s face while he stroked just under Suga’s eye. “I can help you out if you tell me-”

“No it’s okay!” Suga’s rushed answer didn’t help ease the tension, and he nervously chewed on his lip when seeing the flash of hurt cross over his boyfriend’s face. He wanted to apologize, but that would only make Daichi question more. Unsure of what to say, he nervously yanked at the edge of his shirt, hoping his discomfort didn’t show on his face.

“Excuse me.” The soft voice of the baker caught both men’s attention, Kageyama clearing his throat while he bowed awkwardly. “Sorry to interrupt, but I need Sugawara-san’s assistance in the kitchen. There...seems to be an issue with the refrigerator.”

“Of course!” Too eager to escape the situation, the planner tried to give an apologetic smile to Daichi while stepping away. “You should go check in with Asahi. Tell Kuroo to transition you guys to the altar, and we can catch up after the ceremony.”

“Sure, so long as you save me a dance.” A quick kiss to his cheek made Suga’s heart skip, and his eyes lingered on Daichi’s disappearing form. He let out a quiet sigh before turning to his baker, who looked uncomfortable when Suga smiled.

“Okay, which one is it? It better not be the one we just fixed because I paid-”

“The refrigerator is fine.” A screwed up mix of a frown and a grimace made the taller man wince, hands clenching by his sides. The look may have seemed more intimidating if not for the newly flushed cheeks rounding out the image. “I just thought...you looked uncomfortable, and I wanted to repay you for my date with Hinata. So I...lied. Sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry for taking care of family.” Suga’s laugh was genuine as he leaned up to pat the younger man’s head, grinning at the deeper blush he received. “Thank you, Tobio.”

“It’s not that I don’t like Daichi-san,” Kageyama answered quickly, eyes darting to the side to avoid meeting Suga’s inquisitive gaze. “I do think he is good for you. And I know that you’ve found someone who makes you happy.”

“He does,” the planner admitted quietly, feeling his smile shift into something soft as he pressed his hand to his heart.

“Suga, you ready to start this rodeo?” Kuroo’s voice in his ear made Suga focus back to the wedding at hand. Taking a slow breath, the planner pressed his fingers to the earpiece, voice steady with confidence.

“Alright, Little Crows, time to fly.”

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Yamaguchi cried when Asahi and Noya exchanged their vows. It wasn’t the first wedding he’d cried over; out of the Little Crows, Yamaguchi was the worst with the waterworks. Weddings were filled with hope and positivity that the young florist rarely got to see in the world. Tears were
acceptable, in his opinion, so he never held back. But this wedding, he knew, was special to him, so he didn’t hesitate to wipe his eyes and cheer at the kiss at the end of the ceremony.

Thought the florist rarely stayed for the reception, and never as a guest. But Noya, being as unexpected as he’d been since day one, had banned the little crows from “working” once the reception had begun.

“Our guests can take care of themselves; you guys are important, too. So celebrate with us on our special day!”

Which explained why he was laughing so hard at the terrible dance-off between Hinata and Tanaka. Their moves were terrible, but each man swayed as if they were the only people in the room. The spunky redhead had tried to drag Yamaguchi into the fray, but he had quickly declined, keeping to the edge of the dance floor to simply watch. And between Hinata’s running man and Tanaka’s sprinkler move, he knew he’d made the right choice. Nursing a glass of water (as he refused to even think of drinking on the job), the florist glanced around the reception to check on the other guests. Even if he wasn’t serving food or cleaning tables, he still wanted to keep aware of the party in case of an emergency. Most of the guest he didn’t know, but a flash of blond hair was quick to catch his interest.

Tsukishima was across the hall, engaged in a conversation with Kuroo and Kenma. Bokuto was leaning over the DJ stand to join in the talking, though he continued to check in with the tracks that he was playing. Tsukishima didn’t look amused with anything they were talking about, but he made no move to leave. Kenma also looked bored, eyes glued onto the game console he had snuck in. Suga would scold him if he was caught, and from the way he tried to hide the glow into Kuroo’s side, the editor was aware of it. Kuroo didn’t seem to mind the close proximity, an arm wrapped around the shorter man’s shoulders. Their compatibility was effortless as if they were born to be together.

He turned his attention back to the lawyer, unsure if he should approach the conversation. Though the pair had been talking through texts throughout the week, their busy schedules hadn’t allowed them to meet since the gala. It’d been lonely without their small meetings, which had helped Yamaguchi get through the hectic weeks of the wedding season. But Tsukishima had been wrapped up in his own business, and the florist kept his disappointment hidden. He still wasn’t sure about the relationship between them, and despite their recent improvement, the bet from their first meeting still lingered in the back of his mind. It’d been weeks since either had brought it up, but Tsukishima was not known for letting things go. Was this why the lawyer had pulled back in the recent week? Throughout the ceremony, Tsukishima hadn’t looked nearly as moved as his friends, and the lack of emotion had worried Yamaguchi. Did the lawyer still see no beauty in love? And if so, did that mean Yamaguchi would really have to quit Little Crows?

“Yamaguchi!” A friendly call of his name had the florist glancing to the side, surprise at seeing a familiar bob of blond hair. Yachi’s eyes twinkled with joy as the two exchanged a hug, her little hands grasping onto his while she smiled. “I’m so happy I finally found you. I’ve been looking for a half hour.”

“I didn’t know you were going to be here,” Yamaguchi answered, Yachi laughing while she swung their hands.

“I hadn’t been sure I was going to go at first, but I managed to work it out in my schedule.”

“She’s been keeping me company throughout the night.” A calm voice caught Yamaguchi’s ear, blown away from the beauty that Kiyoko presented in her evening gown. Yachi’s deep blush seemed to agree, only releasing Yamaguchi’s hand to accept the one offered by the doctor. A
warmth spread through Yamaguchi’s chest when seeing their connection, their fingers linking with ease. “Hitoka is a wonderful date.”

“I-I’m not that great!” Flushed and stuttering, Yachi pushed her hair behind her ear while glancing away from the conversation. Yamaguchi exchanged a pleased smile with Kiyoko before changing the conversation to relax his nervous friend.

“Have you tried Kageyama’s desserts? The macaroons are always a crowd favorite.”

“I have and they were amazing!” Yachi gushed, Kiyoko nodding once to show her own approval.

“The wedding was very well done; your company had earned its reputation as being the best.”

“Suga’s really good at his job.” Yamaguchi preened at the compliment, refusing to let his normal modesty deflect the kind words. He was proud of the work his team did, and hearing it paid off was always something he reveled in.

“Your centerpieces were quite elegant, as well.” The direct praise, however, was a little harder to swallow. Before he had time to think of how to answer it, the change of the song had Yachi perking up, glancing to the dance floor. Quick to grab onto the distraction, the florist took a step away from the couple.

“I need to check in with someone, but you two should go dance.” The women stole a glance toward each other, Yachi’s obvious hesitation making the taller woman take the lead.

“After you.” And then the couple was moving, joining a few couples onto the dance floor. His eyes lingered for a moment, watching the romance bloom between the two women. It was sweet to watch, but he didn’t feel comfortable encroaching on their moment for long. Instead, he turned back toward where he had seen Tsukishima last, feeling himself frown when the lawyer didn’t fill his sight.

“Kuroo-san, did you see where Tsukki went?” His approach gained devious glances from the photographer and DJ, instantly putting the florist on alert. He let a squeak slip out when an arm snagged over his shoulders, the dark-haired man yanking Yamaguchi under the arm that wasn’t holding Kenma.

“You missing your boyfriend already?” It wasn’t the right term for his friend, as neither of them had officially stated their relationship, but Yamaguchi felt his face light up in color regardless. Bokuto’s loud laugh was heard even over the music, and the freckled man wondered if he could cut his losses and search for the man himself.

“Kuroo.” Kenma’s elbow seemed to hit its mark in the lean man’s stomach, making Kuroo flinch in pain before sending a wounded look the editor’s way.

“That’s boyfriend abuse.” The title was a little surprising to Yamaguchi, who blinked before sending a confused glance toward the smaller blond.

“We’re working on it.” Kenma barely looked over to him before back down to his screen, words just bubbling over the loud music. “He said he was going to the greenery for something. Didn’t tell us what.”

“We thought it was a rendezvous for you two to make out at, but since you didn’t know, I’m guessing that’s out of the running.” Bokuto’s input made Kuroo snicker and Yamaguchi sigh, knowing he’d never shake their merciless teasing. Instead of answering he took the change of the song to excuse himself from the venue, retracing steps he walked multiple times throughout his
workday. The music was barely audible by the time he reached his workshop, seeing the light spilling out from under the door. Slowly he pushed the greenery door open, and locating the blond among the flowers was easy.

“Tsukki? What are you doing out here?” He took his time approaching the middle of the greenhouse, unsure of the mood his friend was in. The face of the calm man gave nothing away, his slender fingers gently pressing to the petal of the red roses in front of him. Yamaguchi glanced down at the flower in confusion, unsure of the point in being at his greenery. On his best day, Tsukishima complained about the dirt and lack of clean surfaces in the place. Why would he choose the time he wore an expensive wedding suit to come in? Still, Yamaguchi remained quiet, his hands awkwardly twisting together in front of him as he waited for the lawyer’s reasoning.

“Did you know the rose is thirty-five million years old?” The question felt rhetorical, especially when the florist realized he’d been the one to tell the man that information months ago. Tsukishima gave a moment of pause before he picked up the thorn-filled stem, avoiding the pricks while twirling the flower between his fingers. “First discovered in China, and used as a warning of fighting and war. Then it was transferred to being used for trading goods, like a form of currency. In fact, any trace of its use as a romantic tool wasn’t until the eighteenth century. Millions of years this plant meant nothing intimate, and yet people praise it as the true symbol of undying love.”

“Most people don’t have flower encyclopedias in their heads,” Yamaguchi replied quietly, knowing his intense knowledge over the subject at hand was rare. Tsukishima didn’t look at the brunet, giving a quiet hum of acknowledgment before he dropped the flower back to its holder. Then he was moving again, eyes scanning quietly among the choices of foliage before stopping in front of the collection of jasmine. Small, white petals hardly compared to the vibrant rose from before, yet Tsukishima took more care in lifting the small evergreen.

“I asked you once, what flower you’d choose for yourself. You never answered me.”

“Oh, uh...I guess I just don’t really think any flower really works for me. I’m not...” He knew what people saw when they looked at him in comparison to his beautiful co-workers, and befriending Tsukishima hadn’t made his looks any easier to embellish. But saying that felt pathetic, and he didn’t need the man’s pity or sympathy. He was sure the blond would roll his eyes or scoff at the claim, but even that would feel uncomfortable. So instead he looked down to his feet, rocking along the dirt while shrugging his shoulders. “I’m not like you guys.”

“That’s stupid.” The blunt response was sharp, and it made Yamaguchi flinch in response. He tried to keep his eyes away from the lawyer but felt compelled to look up when footsteps started to walk toward him. The dainty, jasmine flower was still held in his grasp, twirled in a way that hinted at unexpelled energy.

“Tsukki?”

“In religious ceremonies in India, the Jasmine flower is a representation of something pure. Something that hasn’t been...defiled yet.” A hint of a smirk on the lawyer’s face had Yamaguchi’s cheeks inflamed, mixed between heat and shame. He couldn’t pick which one won out before the man was speaking again, continuing his slow approach toward the florist. “It’s the national flower of Pakistan for it’s gentle strength and tranquil nature. Thailand uses it as a symbol for someone that deserves respect and adoration. The United States connect it to modest beauty. Something that doesn’t need bold colors and intricate patterns to express its attractiveness. But, in most cultures, it is seen as a flower of love.”

“It...is very popular flower for younger brides in the spring. More so in Tuscany than America, though,” Yamaguchi admitted weakly, glancing down at the mentioned plant in-between them.
The petals brushed against his chest when Tsukishima stepped closer, and the florist felt his breath hitch at the warm air around his ear.

“You once told me every flower has a myth behind it.” And the implication was there, Yamaguchi swallowing at the close proximity between them before he gave a hesitant nod.

“According to legend, a Tuscan gardener received a jasmine plant from Persian traders and planted it in his private garden. He refused to let anyone cut the flowers from his garden. People wanted the flower for its beauty and were willing to pay copious amounts of money to have it. They offered gold, their daughter’s hand in marriage, and even a seat in royalty. But each time, the gardener refused. Then one day, he presented a branch of the jasmine flowers to his beloved, a poor baker’s daughter down the street. She was so taken by the fragrance she agreed to marry him – thus began the Tuscan tradition of including jasmine in the bridal bouquet.”

“He could have had anything he wanted, and he chose a baker’s daughter.” The blunt edge to the lawyer’s words made anger and pain swell inside Yamaguchi, who huffed and turned his glare up at the golden eyes above him.

“He chose love! Money and fame didn’t matter to him because he was in love. What’s wrong with that?!”

“Love makes people stupid.” A steady touch slipped over the florist’s fists, unballing them to place something smooth between his fingers. Spending a decade around flowers meant the brunet knew what a stem felt like, and didn’t need to turn his confused gaze down to confirm he now held the jasmine flower. Instead, he kept his stare on Tsukishima, whose eyes lacked the normal casual look they held when speaking of ‘frivolous’ things. Instead, they were quieter, no chill or daunting demeanor to them. “Weddings especially; they’re extravagant and people recall the most heinous stories from your time with them. It’s like a sacrifice to whoever is involved.”

“Weddings aren’t a sacrifice.”

“The reason,” Tsukishima interrupted, eyes shining with an emotion Yamaguchi had never seen displayed on the blonde’s face. “I’ve been so busy at work the past few weeks was because I was referring my clients to other divorce lawyers in the area.”

“I-I don’t understand.” the words Yamaguchi tried to push through fell flat when a warm palm pressed to his cheek, guiding the florist’s head back with little resistance. Brown eyes widened in surprise at the soft brush of lips against his own, a whisper of a kiss that felt nothing like the steamy collection he’d shared with the lawyer before. His fingers clutched the flower close to his chest as his eyes fluttered shut, his heart bursting from the see-sawing emotions inside him. Their kiss was brief, only lingering for a moment before Tsukishima pulled away, seeming to wait for Yamaguchi to gain his sense back to speak.

“I am pursuing another avenue of business; by which I mean I resigned from my position as a divorce lawyer. You won, Tadashi.” The news floored Yamaguchi, who gasped sharp enough to cause his chest to freeze up. A few coughs pressed into the shoulder he stumbled into helped clear the air passage again, but the freckled man could hardly believe his ears.

“You-you resigned?! Tsukki I would have never asked you to do that! You’re too important to me to ever keep a stupid bet like this.” One hand refused to let the Jasmine plant escape while the other yanked on his hair, the panicking florist looking up at the arched eyebrow presented to him and whining. “Can you get your job back? Can you-oh God, I’ve ruined your whole life! I wanted to win, but not if-what are you going to do about your bills or your career or your house-.”
“I didn’t leave the company, idiot.” There was a smug look that proved the blond was enjoying how panicked he’d become after the bombshell. Still slightly frazzled and confused, Yamaguchi tried to get his mouth to function before finally letting out a confused squeak. It seemed to be all the prompting needed for Tsukishima to sigh, wrapping an arm around the slender waist of the florist and pulling him back again. “They just moved me to dealing with the intellectual property division; they’ve been asking me to take over for a year, but I saw no need to change until now. The raise at the time hadn’t seemed worth it. It’s more work, of course, and I’d have to supervise a small team. Plus, dealing with businessmen who think they’re entitled to the world tends to irritate me. But I signed my acceptance letter yesterday morning.”

“You did this because of a bet?”

“I did it for the same reason as your Tuscan gardener.” And again, the emotion that made Yamaguchi’s eyes water despite the wedding ceremony being done hours ago reflected clearly across Tsukishima’s face; love. “The right person can be worth a little sacrifice.”

“Kei I-I-me too, I-Tsukki I-.” Yamaguchi stopped trying to speak, the tears rolling down his face lacking any pain or sadness. Though he’d cried at weddings before, nothing compared to the pure happiness that was rushing through his body at the moment. Tsukishima felt the same. He loved Yamaguchi. It was too much to reel in, and his arms trembled as another rush of tears hit him. He tried to wipe the backs of his hands against his cheeks while he sobbed, hearing a quiet ‘tsk’ between his sniffles.

“You are an ugly crier.” The hug he was pulled into was warm, Yamaguchi burying his face into Tsukishima’s coat while he bawled. He was sure he was ruining the outfit, pairing with the dirty shoes and humidity of the greenhouse wonderfully. But Tsukishima didn’t complain, simply running his hand down the brunet’s back to comfort the teary mess in his arms. Somewhere in the back of his mind, Yamaguchi knew he’d have to apologize to Noya and Asahi for leaving their wedding so early.

But for now, all that mattered was the lawyer who’d fallen in love with the florist.

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“What are you doing?” Suga jumped at the voice behind him, turning to see a frown maring the tailor’s pouting lips.

“I’m just checking the sweets table.”

“Did you not hear the part when the rolling shrimp and the tower of nerves demanded we sit back and relax for the rest of this wedding? Because I know your ass, and I’m positive it was the one in front of me when we were released of our duties for the night.”

“I just want to make sure that the waiters are still checking in on the guests-”

“No, you’re just trying to avoid your hunky boyfriend for reasons that I don’t understand. I mean, honestly, I dressed him in the sexiest suit I could find, and practically gift-wrapped him for you to have kinky wedding sex with. If I wasn’t being seduced Iwa-chan’s magnificent biceps and ‘slow as a tortoise because I want a real relationship’ standards, I’d be climbing Daichi’s thighs like a tree.”

“Tooru!” Suga wasn’t sure if the noise that fell from his mouth after was a laugh or a growl, knowing his friend wouldn’t cross that boundary. If Oikawa heard it, he didn’t respond, plowing forward with his earlier rant.
“But because you’re playing ‘where’s Suga?’ and hiding, my boyfr-thing is being hoarded by your lover and I am not getting to make out with him. Do you understand why I’m not impressed with your inspection of the coconut fudge?”

“I’m not trying to ruin your fun,” Suga answered softly, the tailor glaring at him for a moment before his shoulders dropped and he gave a low groan.

“Oh my God, I cannot believe this is my life.” Before Suga could answer, Tooru had his wrist in his grasp, pulling him over to sit at one of the deserted tables. “Sugarbear, did you and Thighchi break up and not tell me?”

“No, it’s nothing like that! I am still very invested in my boyfriend.”

“Then does he have a small penis or something, because I swore from the moaning last week-”

“Everything is fine in that department.” Suga glanced around them to make sure that no lingering guests were around to overheard the conversation about his boyfriend’s package. That was the last thing they needed on a review.

Tooru really needed to move back to his own apartment.

“Then what gives? Why aren’t you sucking up the romance and dancing the night away with him?” Tooru’s arms crossed over his chest to emphasize his irritation, but Suga could see the truth; his partner was worried, and was trying his best to be emotionally supportive. The fact he was even attempting an adult conversation with Suga proved just how much Iwaizumi was rubbing off on him.

“I guess I’m just a little freaked out about what Noya said earlier today. About me and Daichi...us being in love.” A long pause fell between them, their stares staying locked for the tense silence until Oikawa furrowed his brows.

“Why? You two were obviously made for each other. It’d be disgusting if it wasn’t so sweet.” It was heartwarming to hear his friend admit to something so unlike him, but it rubbed his nerves into a tizzy of anxiety again.

“It’s just so unexpected. I didn’t think I’d ever even come close to what my parents had, so I was okay with not getting myself into this predicament-”

“Wait, hold the phone.” A hand in the air paused Suga’s slight rambling, another droll look spreading across Tooru’s face. “You’re not seriously trying to pull this card mere hours after the Noya debacle, right?”

“What do you mean?”

“Oh, Suga-kun, you are lucky you are so pretty.” Two hands grabbed the wedding planner’s face before turning it toward the dancefloor, aiming it to stare at a puzzling scene.

Kageyama’s back looked stiff as a board, his legs seeming to forget they had knees when his shorter dance partner pulled them closer. Blue eyes glanced around nervously at the other guests, but little hands yanked the baker’s collar enough to get the attention back on him. Hinata’s gaze was warm when he linked his arms around Kageyama’s neck, mouth moving too fast to read the words being spoken to the other. The tall man glared down at the snickering teacher, but the tension slipped off his body while a lean arm yanked Hinata closer to dance. It was a befuddling moment that made Suga smile. Kageyama looked happy, even as the two pretended to bicker through the slow dance. The serious, stoic boy that had hidden away in his kitchen was gone, and
Hinata had been the one to lead the change.

“Do you see those two idiots? One wouldn’t know how to use his dick if it came with a manual, and the other thinks mac-and-cheese is a tough dinner to make. They’re hopeless, totally different from the perfect couple your parents were, but they’re falling for each other anyway.” Oikawa’s words were crude but true, and Suga tilted his head back to glance at his partner’s eye roll. “Could you imagine anyone other than the shrimp making Tobio-chan smile? Because if you tried to give him some perfect love story, he wouldn’t know what to do with it. God help the soul who’d try.”

“What does this have to do with me and Daichi?”

“If I have to spell it out for you like this, then you’ve been hanging out with Kuroo too long.” The teasing tone was soon dropped when Tooru sobered up, his hands grabbing Suga’s to give them a squeeze. “Don’t let him slip away because you’re scared of not living up to this unrealistic expectation you have of happily ever after. What you guys have is real, which, in my amazing and should totally be paid for by the minute opinion, is even better. If you ended up with a guy like Daichi, your parents would be so proud.”

“You’re…” But there was nothing else to say. Tooru was right; Daichi was amazing. And all of the panic he’d felt since Noya had dropped his accidental bomb had nothing to do with incompatibility or forced feelings. Suga’s heart belonged to Daichi from the moment shook the officer’s hand and teased him during the walk-through. And even if they weren’t high school sweethearts or the quintessential romance, they were still perfect. Their story was theirs and theirs alone; nobody could duplicate it or try to change it to their agenda. And wasn’t that what Suga always loved about planning weddings? Why he loved listening to the tales of how each couple fell in love? How was he any different?

“Now, this is what’s going to happen.” Oikawa rose from his seat, dusting the imaginary dirt off his suit as he gave a devilish grin to Suga. “I’m going to go over there and convince my very boring and hot officer that dry humping in the back of the kitchen is perfectly acceptable wedding behavior, and you’re going to get your white knight and ride off into the sunset or whatever it is lovers do. And we will never make Tooru be a couples therapist again. Seriously, it’s ruining my reputation.”

“I thought Iwaizumi’s "rule of blue-balled chastity" was ruining that?” Suga asked, though the tailor merely waved his hand in the air before walking away. Suga watched the sneaky brunet slip between the talking officers, smile bright and hands already moving over Iwaizumi’s arms. But instead of dragging him into a seedy corner or back room, Iwaizumi led his boyfriend onto the dancefloor to a song that was much too slow to grind to. But if the bright grin and barely there blush was anything to go by, Tooru was exactly where he wanted to be.

“Should I be worried that Oikawa just called me ‘thighmaster’?” Daichi’s voice was soft with his approach, Suga laughing despite the hopelessly confused look on his boyfriend’s face.

“He just really likes your legs,” Suga replied, turning to face the best man with a smile. There was a distance between them that felt strange after being close for so many months, but Daichi’s awkward stance and hands in his pockets showed he wasn’t going to breach it. It wasn’t hard to assume the cop had picked up on Suga’s avoidance and was providing space instead of demanding answers. Just like every other instance, Daichi was showing respect and patience with the wedding planner.

“Is this going to be a thing, now? Or will it wane when he and Iwaizumi finally sleep together?”

“If I knew how Tooru’s mind worked, I’d be happy to tell you. But he makes up codes in the
shower and things revenge sex is a good tool to use in war.” Feeling bold from his earlier revelation, Suga stepped forward, placing his hand onto the officer’s arm. “And though I don’t mind talking about my coworker, I thought I should clear the air by saying I’m sorry.”

“Sorry?”

“For being a little off today; I know that I said I was fine earlier, but I just needed a little time to sort out some stuff. And you’re being so understanding, even if I’m not sure I deserve it, so I wanted to apologize.”

“You don’t have to apologize, so long as you’re okay now.” A hopeful smile crossed the officer’s face, and Suga didn’t hesitate in placing a soft kiss against Daichi’s lips. Instantly it was reciprocated, and the tension that had lingered between them was quick to evaporate. A hum of contentment moved past Suga’s lips when he pulled away, grinning up at his quiet boyfriend while jerking his thumb to the dancefloor.

“So do you want to cash in on that dance now? Or were you waiting for the Cha Cha slide? Though I have a feeling that’s going to be Tanaka’s favorite dance.”

“Can I give you something, first?” The answer was unexpected, and Suga watched in quiet curiosity as Daichi fumbled with the pocket of his suit. “Remember that evidence I had to wait for this morning?”

“That almost made you late to your best friend’s wedding?” Suga teased, enjoying the red tinting Daichi’s ears as he nodded.

“It’s cause I had to push a rush on my request and get my chief’s approval before I could get them out of police custody. But it couldn’t wait.”

And then the world stopped. Suga’s eyes dropped down to the item being presented to him, the familiar box making his heart skip. It took several moments for Suga to lift a shaky hand out, pulling the top of the velvet away to see something he was sure he’d never have again. The wedding rings his parents wore glimmered against the black velvet like the first day they were worn. Desperate to make sure he wasn’t dreaming, Suga pulled the box into his own hands, fingers stroking against the metal of the rings. Everything was identical to how he’d remember them, from the slight groove in his mother’s diamond to the little wear and tear of his father’s band. They were imperfect, and Suga couldn’t help but clutch the rings to his chest.

“Daichi, this is amazing. I can’t thank you enough! But you...you really risked being late for my parents’ rings?” Suga whispered, turning his attention to the loving smile Daichi responded with.

“They’re important to you and I didn’t want them to wait in the police station any longer than they had to. They belonged home with you. I knew Asahi would understand.” There was no hesitation or regret in his explanation, which made it so easy for Suga to throw his own fears and caution to the wind.

“I love you.” No words had been easier to say for the wedding planner, who didn’t shy away or laugh after his declaration. “Daich I really, truly love you.”

He met Daichi’s stunned gaze head on, hoping something in his expression would prove that the words he’d been so scared of that morning were 100% true. Even if the officer didn’t answer back, or was scared off by the declaration, Suga needed to say it. Surprise gave way to clarity in Daichi’s strong gaze, lips moving to reply. And Suga was ready for it. If his near future involved a train wreck, the planner would face the impact head on.
“I love you too, Koushi.” But there was no pain or remorse in the brilliant smile Daichi gave him, nor in the kiss that was pressed solidly against his lips. The pressure on his heart drifted away instantly, and Suga didn’t hesitate to wrap his arms around Daichi’s neck and return the kiss. Maybe he was swept up in the romance in the air, or fate really planned for his confession to play out like this. It didn’t really matter to the owner of Little Crows.

Because after giving so many people their happy ever afters, Sugawara finally got his.

Chapter End Notes

Happy tears and smiles around! The Little Crows are off with their love birds and the wedding managed to not blow up. MVP Tooru! Who knew the guy had it in him? I hope that you enjoyed the story, and I’d love to hear what your favorite part/moment/couple were! Thank you all for your love and support, and I hope you'll check out some of my upcoming Stony stories. <3

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