Unrelinquished Feelings

by GeiiKey

Summary

Sawamura Eijun is a tenth grade photographer for the Seidou High Yearbook club with a few of his friends.

He thought he would get a fresh start being at Seidou given his miserable past events. But he was wrong when he heard about Miyuki Kazuya attending on a baseball scholarship. The two doesn't have a pretty history together and to make things worse Sawamura is given the baseball spread to work on for this school year.

Forced to take the spread, Sawamura ends up interacting more with Miyuki than he wanted to, and too much for his health and satisfaction, a new relationship develops.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes
Chapter 1

It was the last period of the day.

By seventh period students are too worn out to pay attention to the lesson, eying the clock every few minutes when seconds felt like hours, teachers grew more strict from previous class disruptions and toss their anger out on the last class, and everyone uses any excuse to not be there by simply going to the bathroom.

It was always like that during school. But somehow, Sawamura felt the total opposite whenever heading into his last period of the day: Journalism.

When the first day of school came around a month ago, and everyone was getting adjusted to the new schedules and learning their way around, the tenth grader discovered that the class he for sure thought was some sort of creative writing class, was actually the yearbook club.

He was thrilled. One being that he joined the yearbook club prior to the school he attended last year and was really experienced with the camera, and the second being that he generally loved taking pictures of school events and activities to show school spirit. And today--being monday-- the teacher had promised that they would start the week by divvying the many spreads amongst the classmate to get started with taking pictures in the early season.

Sawamura was beyond ecstatic because he couldn't wait to see what spread he was assigned. When he skips into the room just by the second the bell rung he takes a seat beside Haruichi, a friend he made right away when being at the school.

The class largely consisted of freshman so it wasn't nervewrecking when it came to introduction. "Good afternoon, Eijun-kun" The tenth grade pinklet greets his friend when he is situated in his seat and placed his bag down beside his feet. "Afternoon, Haruuchi!" The brunet says back and takes out a pencil from his bag.

The pinklet tilts his head and smiles eagerly at the other freshman. "Are you nervous to see what spread you'll get today?" He had asked next, fiddling with his fingers with much apprehension.

"I'm kind of euphoric! I hope I get something like student governement or the cooking club" Sawamura pleads excitedly. Haruichi was a bit surprised by his answer, thinking he be interested in a sport rather than a club. Then again, Sawamura didn't seem athletic at all.

"I hope I get the swim team or brass band, they are kind of an interesting topic around the school, or so I hear" Haruichi says with that monotone light voice of his. Everyone else begins pondering hopefully about the spreads they would get. Some choosing between community service or the football team. Then there were moments where some of the students realized how hard it was going to be to track a specific sport or club down like the bowling team and golf.

But, nevertheless, the teacher silences the class minutes later after doing some work of his own to announce the spreads being given to the students. Sawamura couldn't contain his smile when seeing the old man saunter to the front of the class holding a sheet of paper, that indeed, held the list of spreads being assigned.

Mr. Ochiai clears his throat and begins with "You aren't getting assigned another spread when I tell you what you have. If you have a problem get switched out of the class. Also, if one of you happens to transfer to a new school, which is unfortunate, then I will give the spread to someone more
responsible" the class nods when he is done, and thus, he begins telling the class what they were assigned. Some people got a decent activity/club that they wanted, others did not.

Sawamura begins to sweat a bit when he doesn't hear his name, but still got a bit hopeful when noting a few implements that haven't been named yet. One guy named Toujou ended up with the basketball and cheerleaders, which the guys all grew jealous about because all assumed he would be getting a girlfriend very soon. The innocent orange haired freshman was good-looking so it was a quick deal to be settled.

Another guy named Kanemaru ended up getting football and track. He was blissful about the news. Haruichi got the brass band like wanted, the drama department, and homecoming dance. Three spreads sounded like a lot to work with but Haruichi didn't seem that affected.

The good ones started dissipating like new clothing articles going on sale. Tennis, language academy, gaming club, soccer, and cosmetology were gone.

Sawamura only then began thinking what possible spread was there left for him to even do. "Sawamura Eijun" the brunette almost jumps out of his skin when hearing his name. He felt like every pair of eyes were on him--and they most likely were considering that the only last two spreads that remained anonymous to the loudmouth freshman were written beside his name.

Haruichi begins to rethink all of the activities that were given out and tries to guess what sport and (or) activity wasn't called. His eyes widen when one came to mind; the sport he kept in mind and listened out hard for because he wanted to see who would be seeing his brother every now and then. Now he knows.

"You have community service and baseball" Sawamura recollects the words spoken to him. Community service wasn't a bad option but what the hell was baseball to him? He looks over at Haruichi and gives him a questioning brow. "What's baseball?" The brunette asked. Haruichi jumps and felt a bit offended since he played the sport during junior high. But Sawamura doesn't know that so how could he have possibly known?

"It's the sport where the pitcher throws the ball to the batter and has to reach home before three outs is called" Kominato explains concisely while placing his hand on the table. The puzzled look the pinklet was acquiring only tells him that he still had no clue and found no hope for the freshman ever finishing this spread.

"I'll text my brother since they have practice today, maybe he can get you a schedule" Haruichi offers. A relieved look comes over the brunette's face, though he knew another reason to be stressed out was because he still needed to find the proper money to buy a high quality camera. A groan escapes his lips.

For the rest of the class, for those who had camera's were sent to designated areas of the school to take pictures. Toujou, Kanemaru, Haruichi and Furuya, who had gotten chosen to do the volleyball and wrestling spread, were liaising with Sawamura throughout the class, talking about their spreads and the sports and activities they use to participate in during junior high.

Sawamura slumps in his seat, mourning about being selected to take full responsibility of the baseball spread. "It's not a bad sport, Sawamura" Toujou comforts the brunette with a comical smile. He found Sawamura's misery and dread to doing said spread humorous, and doesn't feel bad when he gets scolded for being a jerk by the tenth grader.

"Look on the bright side" Kanemaru starts and that makes Sawamura snap his neck over at him with a crazy look in the eye.
What's good about staying in the scorching sun all day while getting unnecessary tampered darker skin?!!" He fumes madly.

"Geez I said look at the bright side not directly into the sun" Kanemaru scoffs and lays back in his seat with his arms draped behind his head.

"You are all the very worse supporters ever" Sawamura shot when the final bell rings. Everyone collects their things and begins to exit the class.

Sawamura waits for Haruichi, and instead of taking the train back to Nagano, which was about two hours long --and not attending the school on a scholarship or being an athlete doesn't grant him the ability to stay in a dorm on campus so lucky him-- he follows the pinklet older male outside of the tenth grade building and to the baseball fields.

It was a calming walk on the way, and while he spaces in and out of whatever Haruichi was saying, he takes notice of the two giant fields that were being used by many players. His eyes widen when seeing almost about a hundred people in Field B.

"School only let out ten minutes ago, how the hell are they here already?!" Sawamura rants. Haruichi blushed with embarrassment at how loud he was being and was rethinking his life choices.

"Well from what my brother tells me it's kind of hard getting on the first string, and because our school is known for having a stealthy baseball team everyone wants to be apart of it" Kominato replies as they inch closer to the fields.

Players could be seen hitting balls from pitching machines, diving for balls in the infield and catching pop fly's in the air from outfield. Some were running around the field and some altered between weightlifting and fielding practice. From the swift movements of hitting and throwing the balls and the rain puddles of sweat and water needed to continue on, Sawamura couldn't understand how they were mentally prepared for being in the sun every day of the week.

His face was burning just being out there for five minutes.

It was only then that something clicked in his head. "Wait, your telling me I have to follow these sweaty guys around?!!" He hissed this time in a low tone. Haruichi hesitantly nods not a fan of the look he was getting from his new friend. "Eijun-kun, your cat eyes are showing" he informs his friend worriedly and places comforting hands on his shoulder to back him up. The brunette huffs aloud and proceeds to field A, where they saw a man dressed in a Seidou jacket and cap, white baseball pants, and black sneakers and presumed him to be the coach.

The guy seemed scary looking with his stern emotionless face, shades covering his burning brown eyes from the sun and brows furrowed as he intensively watched specific players on field A. Sawamura didn't want to talk to the scary looking man, but repressed himself from excessive stuttering or any other awkward intentions.

"U-Um, e-excuse me sir!" Sawamura screamed rather loudly. Haruichi face palms himself. Failed.

The coach doesn't jump from the abrupt yell. Only gazes down at the student and gives him a cold hearted look. He doesn't answer, instead, his face implies for the tenth grader to carry on with what he had to say. But Sawamura could barely speak from looking at the inscrutable male. "I thought this was baseball practice! Why the hell do I feel like I am in boot camp?!" Sawamura was ultimately beginning to suspect that he was being punished for whatever crime he can't think of committing.

"I think he wants you to continue" Haruichi’s low tone spooks the trembling loudmouth teen. He
nervously glares at the pinklet but shakes his head anyway and returns his eyes back to the man that had been impatiently awaiting his response for being here.

"O-Of course..." Sawamura stutters and swallows a lump in his throat.

"U-Um, m-my name is Sawamura Eijun, a-and I-I am working w-with the yearbook cub--club! And I was wondering if I could have the schedule for this years season" the brunette was largely skittish when saying this. Haruichi was amazed at how the guy went from being so imbued with energy to stiffing up like a deer about to be hit by a car. What made the situation worse was when he held his hand out as if expecting some type of reward for being so brave. But in all honesty Sawamura just wanted to get this over with and go home.

The man doesn't talk at first, and hell they still are unsure if he was even the coach--"Maybe we should have asked that first.." Haruichi thought to himself with a bead of swear trickling down his cheek.

With the unwavering silence he gives them, both boys were confident enough that he wasn't human. Haruichi awkwardly occupies himself by searching for his brother, which didn't take long, while Sawamura continues to vacantly look at the man, unsure of how to break the contact between them. The guy looked like he could snap his body in half with a flick of his finger if he were to. If he was going to be here and work as their photographer, he was sure that he had to get along with the coach.

That idea seemed inevitable for the both of them so Sawamura soaked that fact up almost quickly. "We are having the preliminaries now so I will give you the schedule for that. We have an upcoming Fall Tournament so if you are obligated to take part in the event for pictures as well then we will save a spot on the bus for you" The man finally spoke as he walks off. Both guys, unsure if they had to follow or not, do so anyway, and stays at a reasonable distance.

When they headed over to the dugout Sawamura was brought to the attention of the clanking noises of the ball flailing in the air. He turns around and saw a runner heading to first while another one took off towards second. The ball is thrown from home at a fast pace into the shortstops glove and is thrown to first base for a double play. A loud laugh echos into the sky.

Sawamura narrows his eyes at the action taking place on the field. "Such a complex sport" he mutters and doesn't realize one of the managers handing him the schedule of papers that the coach originally was giving him.

"Oh, thanks" Sawamura says and carefully places the schedule in his book bag.

"If you need anything else just say so" The jet haired women says with a cordial smile. She walks away and Sawamura turns his attention to Haruichi, who was talking with another male with pink hair. From the evident logic, he could tell that was brother. "Hey, Harucchi! I got the schedules le-" the brunette was cut off when a hard springing pain jolts into the left temple of his face. A lot of unpleasant "ooh's" surfaced the field, and even Haruichi cringed at the sight when hearing the popping noise of Sawamura being bopped in the head by the ball was executed by a specific brunette batter.

Some of the players rushed over, and Haruichi bends down to Sawamura's level and lays a hand on him. "Are you okay, Eijun-kun?!" He asked worriedly.

"He got hit in the head with a ball thrown 125mph at a batter with a powerful consistent swing. Just send him to the damn infirmary" The shortstop rolls his eyes.

"It's ashame that didn't kill him, his voice is very irritating" A low hums ripples through Sawamura's
ears. "Aniki that's not nice" Haruichi says as he helps his friend up.

The shorter pinklet huffs and walks back to his position on the field, dismissing the incident.

"Hey, Miyuki, go send him to the nurse with little Kominato, he's your problem" A loudmouth bearded male yells and jogs back to the field. Sawamura forces his eyes to open but couldn't control the pain lodging in his head. He grits his teeth and tries to shake the pain away by moving his head, but that only seemed to have worsened the pain. A sluggish groan emits from the tenth graders lips and he gradually slips out of Haruichi's soft grip.

Before he could hit his head again on the floor, he was caught into muscular arms and blacked out entirely.

The light from the ceiling that filled the room, stings at the freshman's eyes when they slowly opened. Shielding his eyes from the light, the inclined brunette hospitalized in the nurses office' lays up from the bed he had been resting on.

He was in a room all alone. A cup of ice water sits expectantly for the male on the table near a sink, and a patch of ice that had been resting on the left side of his temple plants onto his lap.

"Ouch" Sawamura groans when a rush of pain hits his head. He clutches the area the pain mostly dwelled in and tightly closes his eyes. "Gosh, whoever hit that ball is a damn monster! This hurts a lot" Sawamura massages the spot to ease the pain and surfs his eyes over at a clock that hung over a computer station. It read 5:21pm.

His eyes widen. "I'm suppose to be home!" He exclaims loudly and jumps down from his spot on the bed. He grabs his bag that was slouching against the wall and grips onto the knob of the door and swings it open. As soon as he runs out the room he collides with a hard chest and is pushed down to the ground again.

He winces at the aching pain in his legs and gets up from the tile floor and glares at whoever was in the way. "Watch where you are going!" He yells and fixes his hold on his bag. The brunette was quickly getting irked by the amount of times he has been hit in the past 3 hours. The pain in his body hits at his joints, and the churning of his stomach digesting itself makes him feel worse.

"Now that's no way to talk to your senpai" the familiarity of a sly and cheeky voice comes to mind, startling the brunette in his spot. His golden eyes shifted over to an entity he had not seen in a while. His heart begins beating rapidly and his hands became clammy around the strands of his bag.

He had not heard that annoying voice in over a year, and while it has been the most spectacular year of his life, that he now wish he wisely enjoyed, the brunette could only think 'why??'.

Out of all the places in the world, out of all the schools in the country; the state; the fucking county. Why did he have to come to Seidou?

Sawamura glares at the taller brunette in front of him, taking notice of his shaggy disheveled brown hair that stuck to his forehead, his see through sporting glasses that perfectly shielded his amber colored eyes that glowered at him, his lips are unusually picturesque in a conniving smirk. The male had on a Seidou baseball uniform, which invalidated the obvious question for why he was here.
"T-This is a nightmare right?" He asked aloud to himself, but an unwanted answer from the male is spoken.

"I would rather prefer you asking 'is this a dream'? Not a lot of people who faint are lucky enough to wake up to a handsome guy in the nurse office, y'know?" he smirks.

God that smirk. It was that smirk he despised the most. Every time Sawamura saw that cunning look on his face he had the urge to slap him. It was too annoying to look at. "You conceited, selfish devil with glasses" the shorter and younger brunette growls.

"Aw, don't be like that Eijun-kun, I was sure during our devastating year apart that you would at least grown to miss me" Miyuki crosses his arms and leans in close to taunt his little play toy. Sawamura shivers at the name he was originally called by Haruichi. Now, it just sounded like he was being ridiculed.

"I would NEVER miss someone like you, Miyuki Kazuya!" Sawamura declared and tries to stomp by. Only thing was the year older male was preventing him from doing that by stepping in his way.

"Ugh! Miyuki!" Sawamura yells with clenched fist. The looks the bespectacled teen was receiving from the raging freshman flooded him with ludicrousness. He always enjoyed seeing the younger male's face turn into an indecipherable red color and his face scrunch up into a sour look that made it seem like he tasted something bad. It was quite humorous.

He chuckles. "C'mon, admit you've missed me at least once" Miyuki somehow made that sound very deceptive. Sawamura rolls his eyes and pushed passed the junior and found the nurse nearby.

"Um excuse me, am I eligible to leave? I really got to get home" Sawamura says to the women with a worried look. He ignores the thought of Miyuki being around and was more fixated on getting home. The nurse' brows rose but she smiles seeing how well he was doing without personal assistant.

"Does your head still hurt?" She asked tapping at her chin. "A little but I think I'll manage" he answers.

"Okay, well nothing major broke so you're fine. Just be cautious of your surroundings next time, alright? You can go on home" the nurse notifies him. He genuinely smiles at the nurse and walks on out of the school, hurrying to the train station so he wouldn't miss the next one.

"Why in a rush, Eijun-kun?" Miyuki says from beside the teen. The brunette jumps but steps away from the figure. "Why are you following me?!" He exclaims madly.

"I'm not following you, I was heading to the store and you just happened to be walking in the same direction" he grins.

"What a lame excuse, Kazuya. I can't believe you go to Seidou" he groans and rubs his temple again to ease the pain that had been slowly augmenting.

"Why not? We get to be together for two more years. I just see a lot of time to mess with you...but anyway, what were you doing at the baseball field?" He asked as his eyes trailed down the figure beside him. He begins to take in the presence that had been long gone from him for a year and smiles at how big he had gotten since the last time he saw him.

Sawamura ignores him but Miyuki presses the question on further until the brunette answers. "I hate you" he growls and hits his hand out of his face.
"Why is that?" The brunette grins evilly. "You have a terrible personality" Sawamura spat.

"Well I don't know about you, but I love this side of Eijun"

"Stop calling me Eijun, it's weird when you say it" Sawamura retorts when they come to the station.

"Well then what do you want me to call you?" Miyuki asked as he leans on a pillar of the station. "I don't want you to call me anything because this is the last time we will encounter each other" he bitterly states while not making any contact. Miyuki didn't feel indifferent towards the matter.

"How demanding, and you really think that will happen?" Miyuki cackles as if the task was impossible. Sawamura looks up at him and meets that atrocious glint in the baseball player's eyes. The small brunette frowns, the other smirks.

Without another word Sawamura walks into the train that was destined to take him to Nagano. Miyuki just stood there and watches the retreating figure enter the train and takes a seat near the door and couldn't help but have a warm feeling stir in the pit of his stomach. "This should be an exciting year" he hums as he strolls off back to Seidou.

On the contrary, Sawamura was staring blankly at his lap, cascading a hand over the bandage taped on the left side of his head. The gnawing pain never fails to make him feel even more miserable. He runs a hand through his hair and lets out a repressed sigh. He relaxes himself in his seat and closed his eyes to take his mind off of today's events.

But he couldn't help but recap every moment of his life in the past where Miyuki royally screwed him over. "Just great...another year with that jerk".
"I CAN'T BELIEVE I GOT THE BASEBALL SPREAD! THE WORSE SPREAD IN YEARBOOK! AND DO YOU KNOW WHY IT'S THE WORSE ONE?!!" Sawamura rambles, clinging to the collar of the innocent orange haired male's shirt, that was, Toujou.

He blinks with trepidation at the boisterous tenth grader, and nervously chuckles when he shrugs his shoulders with uncertainty.

Sawamura let's go of him and exclaims, "BECAUSE MIYUKI KAZUYA PLAYS THE SPORT!" His cat eyes were evident.

Haruichi and Toujou both traded frightened looks. Sawamura had been going off about the spread he was given yesterday, not much caring for the other spread he also gotten, ranting like his problems were more serious than any other more ethical controversial national problems wrong with society today.

When pleading to Mr. Ochai why he shouldn't be given the baseball spread, and coming up with every excuse possible that implenets into his brain with every ongoing second, Sawamura tries his best to persuade his teacher that he should switch with anyone 'more worthy' student that didn't have a sport specifying that said male wasn't in the sport.

To no avail, he was sent back to his seat with no look of glee and content like he had hoped for--not much to the freshman's surprise.

Kanemaru warned him that Mr. Ochai clearly stated the day prior from now that all spreads was final. How could his tiny brain not process even the smallest bit of details?

"Oh yeah...I forgot he's an idiot" he thought like the news was private.

"Eijun-kun, it can't be that big of a deal, just ignore him" Haruichi recommends knowing it would be declined.

"How can I ignore a tanuki that is constantly scratching at my very last; REMAINING, nerves? You know nerves don't repair with damaged right?!!" He barked.

"How the hell does he know that bu-" one classmate drifts off but doesn't finish his sentence when a glare is sent his way.

"Why don't you like Miyuki? And who is he?" Toujou asked with the slightest bit of interest. Maybe if he got some steam off his chest he feel a bit better, right?

The question from the endearing teen sparks a few enthralling faces amongst the other tenth graders that had been openly eavesdropping on his loud rants he so terribly contained at a low level.

Furuya, who had been sleeping for the past fourteen minutes of class, wakes up and turns around in
his seat and rested on Kominato's desk for support of his wailing head to focus more on the topic as well.

Sawamura was startled by the question, but knew his answer. "No" he says too calmly that some had to do a double take. One second he's screaming like a 4-year old with a temper who lost their damn mind, the next?--he is a mysterious angel with a dark past. His friends, perplexed by the sudden response, decides to not question it.

"Okay...well Toujou how are those cheerleaders?" Kanemaru grins mischieviously and scoots over to find out how his friend's first day went. Toujou's face grows red, and his burning humiliation is a response grasped the attention of all.

Sawamura let's out an exasperated sigh when seeing everyone interested in the other being's day. He was relieved to get off the topic concerning him, not wanting to admit why he resented the notorious Seidou athlete.

Without anyone taking notice, he gets up and goes to the bathroom after being granted permission by his teacher.

In the halls, silence lounges around, waiting for the inevitable moment of the bell ringing to dismiss the flood of students held in each class. As Sawamura passes each door he could make out faint chatter of the teacher giving a lesson or students collaborating on a specific assignment together.

He continues to trot the halls, not having the urge to really use the bathroom. He just thought it would be good to get some fresh air while he could. Exhaling a low sigh, Sawamura finally looks up, failing to realize he had walked outside into the courtyard of the school. He kicks his feet, and translates his head down so that the sun wasn't burning in his eyes.

Taking a seat at a nearby bench, Sawamura relaxes for a bit to have at least five minutes to himself. Images from his past slowly creeks up on him like a monster lurking in the dark. He felt his lips voluntarily curl down and his shoulders tense up when embarrassing and horrid scenes came crashing back to his mind like a freight train.

"Why...why did he have to be here" Sawamura tightens his hold on his sweater that elastically tucks inside his stomach from the position he cooled in. His brows unsettled together, and his eyes stayed fixated on a spot not particularly on his mind.

Those golden eyes of his--how fearful and vulnerable they became when sinking the information in. He was honestly scared. Sawamura tries to ameliorate his nerves by breathing regularly and thinking of 'good' thoughts. But that was ineffective given that he could still vividly picture every appalling deed done to him by the older brunette.

The image of that shitty grin and roguish appearance was glued stuck in his head; clinging on whenever he tries to rid the misery ridden thought. Sawamura cringes when he feels like he could hear his laughter--though, it sounded too close to be illusory. Much to his damn heart rate that felt like it would burst out of his chest.

Feeling something plant roughly onto his shoulder, Sawamura does the biggest reaction by jumping and violently scooting to the edge of the bench. He grunts at the jab in his side from the arm rest of the bench and prevents a cry from leaving his lips by biting his tongue. Little pricks of tears stung at the corner of his eyes, though he couldn't bare to cry when his eyes were locked with the one person he felt strong animosity towards.

"MIYUKI KA-"
He was abruptly cut off.

"Don't say my full name, baka" Miyuki snarls when covering his mouth with his hand. He glares at him with a condescending shimmer in his sharp eyes.

Sawamura slaps the bigger hand from over his mouth and rolls his eyes from the command. "Don't put your hands on my mouth" he quips back, earning a sly grin from his enemy.

"Don't talk so loud, Eijun" Sawamura flinches at the mention of his name. "Don't call me that!" He snaps. "Or what? You gonna call your mommy and have her come curse me out with words that aren't even in the dictionary?" Miyuki laughs and pokes at the younger male's head.

"The absolute worse" he grinds his teeth. Miyuki beams at the smaller one. "Only I" "What are you doing out of class anyway?" Sawamura asked, changing the subject while ignoring every possibility to look at the older brunette.

A laugh leaving his throat makes Sawamura's cheeks burn with antagonizing embarrassment. Now, he was starting to feel Toujou's pain about being bombarded with questions about the cheerleaders, except, he was in another predicament.

He doesn't ask Miyuki what he found funny, instead, he waits for a reply when his laughter dies down. "I should ask you the same thing" he pokes Sawamura's cheek in hopes or sparking a reaction. Well he got what he wanted. The younger brunette attempts to grab Miyuki's finger and hopefully break it, though, he guess being an athlete meant having fast reflexes because his finger was gone seconds before making Eijun miss. Another annoying laugh engulfs Sawamura's ears.

"It's none of your damn business, Kazuya!" Eijun growls while standing to his feet, deciding to head back to class before his disappearance became a cold case. And he guaranteed it wouldn't be him lying around the bloody concrete dead.

"Using first names are we? However, I think I have time to hear you out for not being in class" he smirks while crossing his arms. He even checks the time on his phone, a cunning hum vibrating his lips as he thrust the device down his butt pocket. Sawamura was fuming so hard that he thought steam was literally sprinting out of his ears by now. Miyuki's face suddenly drops when coming to a conviction of his own, "Are you skipping, goody-goody?" He asked with mock surprise.

"No I am not! But I know you are" Sawamura emphasizes pointedly while holding out an accused finger.

Miyuki scoffs with disbelief. "I'm about to head to a game, idiot" and it was only then that the golden eyed tenth grader took notice of his change of uniform.

He had on a white Seidou baseball shirt above a blue long sleeve shirt, white baseball pants that hugged tightly around his legs and slides on his feet with matching socks. Miyuki was holding a big bag strapped over his shoulder that seemed to weigh a ton. The pain his shoulder might be going through, although he didn't really seem to mind.

"Oh..." Sawamura sheepishly trails, now feeling like an even bigger idiot. Of course that would be the reason he wasn't in class.

"You seem down, gonna miss me?" Miyuki grins, his teeth showing.

Sawamura gags. "If it'll inflate your oversized ego then no"
Miyuki raises a brows with moral surprise. "So if I had an ego the size of your palm then you'll miss me?" He chuckles.

"You are so full of yourself" The tenth grader mutters. "Thanks" the athlete clicks his tongue before his attention is averted towards one of the other players who was laughing their heads off and jumping around.

"Hey prick, you gonna get on the bus or what?!!" The guy yells from the small group of five that accompanied the front entrance of the school.

Miyuki scoffs at the name while Sawamura holds back his laughter by covering his mouth. It always made him feel better about himself when he knew that the self-centered, egotistical bastard also had someone far more superior than him.

The team turns to leave out the gates, leaving Sawamura and Miyuki in the tenantless courtyard alone with the few birds that swept down every now and then.

"You comin' cameraman? Got to get my best shots for the yearbook if you know what I mean" Miyuki inquires while posing briefly. Sawamura ignores that.

"Fortunately, and thankfully, no. Nor do I want to or care. I also don't have my camera so I can't come until I do" he eye rolls. Miyuki shrugs without care and ruffles the younger male's hair. "Don't do th--!!"

"See you around, Eijun-kun" Miyuki interjects with a wink at Sawamura and skips off before the tenth grader had time to retort him about being called by his first name.

He just stood there, bewildered, his eyes animatedly going white and jaw ajar. He growls to himself, but pulls himself together when a pair of administrators sauntered by with a student. They gave him a spiteful look telling him to get to class.

Shaking his head from watching the fleeting team, Sawamura makes his way back to class, mentally seething to himself while fixing his hair so it wasn't misunderstood for something he did negatively.

"God he is the WORSE! Does he even have friends?? Always coming after me loney idiot! Grah!! Why does he make me so freakin angry?!?"

Sawamura tries to ignore any further thoughts of Miyuki that made him want to jump into a tank of sharks. When it came to the conceited asshole, anything was better than just simply talking with him.

When he gets back to class, Sawamura's presence becomes distinguishable, and not because the door simply clicked shut. "Geez, that was one long shit you took, class is almost over!" Kanemaru snaps.

Sawamura's eyes widen at the news, snapping out of his trance --and all threats about Miyuki vanishes--he steals a look at the clock that defended Kanemaru's case. It was in fact ten minutes till dismissal. He didn't even realize how time flew by so quickly and could of sworn he was only out there for a few short minutes.

"S-Sorry" he stammers and takes a seat in his usual spot.

He still couldn't grasp how he lost track of time but honestly he couldn't care less.

"You seem pale" Furuya states suddenly, looking fixedly at the brunette. "I do...?" Sawamura gwacks.
Haruichi concludes it with a nod. "You were fine when you left. Did you run into Miyuki to come back like a zombie?" The pinklet easily guesses, the only possibility running in his head. Furuya nods with question.

Sawamura bit on his lips with guilt. "Don't...worry about it" he sighs indistinctly and swallows back on a lump. Haruichi and Furuya shares questionable looks, but unlike Haruichi, Furuya easily shrugs the subject off and begins to nap for the rest of the time being.

When the bell rings, Sawamura grabs his things and makes his was out of campus without exchanging another word with anyone. No one bothers him and lets him be.

When pulling up at the train station he waits the half hour for his train to arrive and enters when it approaches, finding a seat near the door like always. He withdraws some work from his bag and starts to do it to make the time pass. As he is working more memories of Miyuki flood his head making the intensity of Sawamura's handwriting dramatically increase tenfold. He grits his teeth; the nearby people noticing the small grunts and the crumble of the paper he worked on avoids him, others switching to another section of the train.

Taking notice of the mostly vacant cart, and a little girl eyeing him suspiciously while sucking on her fingers sloppily, Sawamura stops himself and blinks blankly.

Heat crawls at the nape of his neck when noticing he caused a scene and he packs his things up. Sawamura hated that Miyuki was pretending that nothing happened between them in the past, and that they were rather good friends who haven't seen each other in years. He loathed the transition with much indignation that he thought the vein on his head was going to burst.

"T-That...that damn tanuki" Sawamura contemptuously scowls and busies himself for the rest of the ride by listening to music. The heavy metal he listened to manages to let his mind drift from the junior, his thoughts now set on something totally different than before. A lighter atmosphere vacates the area than the more awkward one earlier.

After the long ride, the train screeching to a stop plays in the brunette's ears, and he is one of the first few people off the train.

He scurries out of the station, regretfully not taking notice of the still scorching sun and covers his eyes.

The sky had turned a light orange hue, indicating the fall evening. The trees in Nagano were already almost naked without the orange-red leaves covering them. The air is more tepid and humid, traditionally setting the yearly tone of the city.

Sawamura wasn't lying when he thought his hometown was much more cozy than Kokubunji. For one, there weren't as many cars like there is in the city. He was used to the whole everyone walking thing. And the other being that it wasn't as busy like other parts of Tokyo.

The homely feeling really did put Sawamura's mind at ease. The walk back home isn't as bad as always, though the ride always made him feel cranky, he pulls through though. When he gets home, he walks around the little restaurant his family owned to get to his room.

He could smell the aroma of frying fish and scented vanilla candles from where he stood. Growing up in Nagano, a medium class ranked city, money was always looking good one day and bad the next. Money was always a problem for the Sawamura residency. The only way they kept from being evicted was their mom working two jobs and the rest of the family pitching in on a restaurant they spent all their funds in. It was a good small department that made money most of the time, largely
advertised by flyers or customers rating them.

The atmosphere was always mellow; comical acts of Eijun and his dad always rewarded them with larger tips, and Eijun himself was a great waitress that he got himself more than bargained for. But saving up for a high quality camera would be tough knowing that he pitched in and spent his money on last month's rent.

Sawamura enters his room and plants his bag down beside his door. He doesn't wait to change into his uniform. Stripping from his school uniform he immediately takes notice of the purple gash on his side that had been the effect of him hitting the arm rest earlier. He curses when he feels on it and a sting shot at his waist.

Deciding to worry about it later, Sawamura changes into his uniform when he hears the door to the house unlocking followed by rapid thumps of footsteps.

He jumps at the pounding of his door that bounces off the walls, and reluctantly opens it to see his childhood friend smiling gleefully at his presence while holding a spare apron.

"Ei-chan!" She exclaims, throwing her arms over the taller brunette who leisurely envelopes her with his arms. He winces when feeling pain strike him again.

"Hey, Wakana, I thought my parents gave you the day off?" Sawamura scratches his head and begins tying his apron around after getting it.

"I wanted to help out, silly" she gushes and looks up at him with a smile that stretched from ear to ear. His eyes softened at her tolerant heart. She was always willing to help without extra pay. Wakana was a true blessing that his mom considered her as Sawamura's wife, which he declines every time.

Going to say something else --but stops--Wakana's face dropped when catching sight of the bandaged stuck to his left temple and tilts her head. Being the only one who hadn't heard of the incident, it was obvious she was highly worried about him. He lets her fingers cascade down the patterned wrapper. The twinkle in her eye was long gone; color from her face drained and replaced with a look he was not familiar with.

"What happened?!" She squeals with a demanding and menacing glare in her eye.

"Ah, I am fine Wakana...honestly" Sawamura frowns and steps back from her while inhaling sharply. She didn't seem convinced, not with that disheartened look he was giving her as a lame answer.

Her lips opened a few times to dictate her thoughts, though she knew it had to be pretty personal if he didn't even want his childhood friend knowing. But that was it, they were childhood friends. What could he hide from her that was so important to not tell?

"Ei-chan..." She drops her hand at her side and fights herself to not get upset over the rejection. The look in his eyes told her to not press any further on the topic. Wakana begrudgingly does so. She had to get back in character to lighten the mood. That's when she remembered--

"Oh yeah! C'mon! We got a full house, we are losing money the more we wait!" She chirps while grabbing ahold of his hand and perfectly fits hers into his, entwining their fingers. They ran out the house, Sawamura trying to keep up with his lack in stamina somehow copes, but ends up gasping for air in the end when they reached the restaurant. "Wa--Wakana! You know I have bad lungs!" He pants breathlessly as he bolsters himself on the counter in the kitchen.
She claps her hands together as an apology, stammering "Jesus! I forgot you had asthma" and earns a glare from her childhood friend. "What do you mean you forgot?!" He snaps making Wakana go into fits of laughter.

"I'll be back with your inhaler" Wakana giggles in a mellow manner and turns to do just that, though he stopped her by calling her name. She jerks around with tinted cheeks and a small smile. "I don't need it" he says and grabs a notepad and pen from the cabinet.

"Now come help me take these orders lazy" he snaps and turns on his heel to walk out the door. The sudden remake made Wakana's brows furrow.

"I am not lazy! Ei-chan!" She whines and follows him out, squishing between the compact rows and columns of chairs and tables to get by.

"Ei-chan!" She laughs humorously, but only out of the sheer euphoria of seeing her friend again. She really did miss him, and Sawamura would be lying if he said it felt like home without her. Wakana was one of the reasons he looked forward to coming back home. If it meant balancing his day out with the horrors of encountering that bastard full of shit.

He scoffs under his breath at the thought of the baseball player. "It hurts that you don't know what a pain in the buttocks you are"
Ongoing Beatings That He Hides

Chapter Summary

More is revealed about Sawamura.

Chapter Notes

Sorry if this chapter is kind of crappy, though I am not gonna lie, had a decent time writing it. I fixed up many errors as possible so please bare with me. Also there is some mild language, I am not really good with the whole bullying argument thing so whatever happens....happens. Fill free to skip it if you want.

Anyways, enjoy the chapter!

The week continued longer than the brunette assumed necessary. What felt like hours was only five minutes and what felt like decades turned out to be seconds in actuality. Upon Friday finally stopping by to greet all high school students to the lovely two day weekend the day couldn't get much better. And to Sawamura's surprise, it has.

After climbing out of bed and hastily changing into his clothes amongst the late three a.m mist, he had gotten a call from a friend of his he hasn't spoken to in a while, and he was sure on the receiving end when it came to their reuniting conversation.

"EIJUN?!? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU CAN'T BE NICE ENOUGH TO CALL ME EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE?" A snarl was heard on the other line when the brunette picked up. Sawamura jumps at his friend's volume.

He chuckles into the phone, however, when hearing the burning rage in the male's tone, he apologizes, "Sorry, I've been busy" another scoff. "How can a tenth grader like you have so much to do?" The derisive comment was seen from miles away by the younger high schooler.

Sawamura secures the door to the comfort of his house and quietly makes his way off the front lawn and down the specific streets to the train station. It was dark for anything to be made out still; the lampose lights still pitching in brightness and the rays from passing cars also adds into the radiant paths. The seasonal fall temperature at its lowest during this time of night snipes whatever skin not concealed by the Seidou student. In addition to the wooly puffy sweater he wore over his uniform and his country black boots, he couldn't feel any warmer than this.

He comes to a hault at a semi busy intersection and pushes the button on the lamp. "So harsh, did you, too, forget that you were once a tenth grader Mei " Sawamura quips as he shoves his free hand back into the warmth of his jacket pocket.

"Tch. I was basically a junior from how everyone looked at me; like I was superior" he cackles egotistically. Kind of reminds Sawamura of someone else who was just as conceited. He cringes when getting the image.
He rolls his eyes. "You mean a junior high student? You're so small that you can bypass going as one" Sawamura breaks down into fits of laughter when hearing a loud gasp from the other end of the line. Such a nerve he inflicted.

"Watch the words coming out of your mouth freshman" Mei remarks coldly. "Don't wanna be targeted by the seniors at your school, you'll surely get into some trouble" he continues. "As if I haven't already" Sawamura mutters incoherently as he proceeds to the pavement beyond the intersection and continues the walk to the station.

"By the way, freshie, did you get your camera yet?" Sawamura's eyes widen when he nearly forgot mentioning his lack of a camera to his friend weeks back. He scratches the back of his head nervously, vividly picturing the face Mei would make if he was to counter on that.

"You see..." The brunette stretches his words out as he enters the station. His voice echos in the merely isolated sector. Only men and women of their own entity accompanying themselves with music or newspapers sat at the benches or leaned against the wall for their designated train.

Sawamura starts to explain how he didn't have time to buy one, but Mei beats him to the punch line right when starting. "I'll meet you at the train station and help you look for one after school" he says without a second thought. The brunettes opens his mouth to rebuttle but doesn't have time to say anything. "Okay! Perfect see you at 4, bye!" And with that, the year older male hangs up, leaving Sawamura alone.

The brunette clenches his teeth in agitation, though doesn't execute anything he'll regret.

Sawamura drops his bag down when he pulls up at a bench occupied by a much older looking female in her late twenties. She's wearing a buisness outfit with her hair tied up in a puffy ponytail. She seemed to be going to a meeting. He pays no mind to her, and averts his eyes to the funnels that was slowly filling and leaving with minimum passengers.

Luckily, he doesn't wait a full hour like any of the other residents. After a tranquil fifteen minutes passed, Sawamura grabs his bag and hauls it over his shoulder before skipping into the familiarity of the compartment.

He sits down at a spot comfortable for him--the seat near the window and exit-- and spends the next hour employing himself with interest of the passing trees and buildings that went by like a blur.

As time past, Sawamura could perspicaciously make out the distinguishable hues of blue that illuminates the sky.

It's an overwhelming sight that alleviates any stress he had felt on his shoulders. And whatever the stressor was that made his shoulders ache with tension was long out of reach to comprehend.

The air of the cool night condenses onto the glass windows, setting in the cool early fall feeling. The train ride is shaky but congenial at the same time. Sawamura found himself lost in thought from the consistency of the silence.

Nothing much could be heard but the drumming of the wheels scraping against the tracks and the susurrant whistling of the conditioner functioning.

In the mixture of said noises clashing together Sawamura still let's the soothing pandemonium commotion relax him.

He gets lost into the tranquillity of the presence of the clatter that he almost doesn't realize the train had already breached the appropriate stop. In one swift movement, Sawamura pulls his bag up and
exits the kinetic mechanism.

Once he was out he got a clear view of the sky. It was a cyan blue, lapsed into the darkened clouds that hid the sun. He saunters out of the station and begins his walk to the prominent school he attended.

By now, his legs are twinging in pain from the constant movements. The effects of the walking he had done prior to when he was going to the train was slowly starting to set down. His waist ached with every movement he utilized into stepping, and his breathing became rigid from doing just that. The wind, albeit, was mellow when shuffling by, easing the tightness in his muscles.

When Sawamura finally makes it to school, he sees compact groups of reasonable numbers in their own cliques. Some girls of the cheer team is hovering together gossiping about whomever, whatever, and whenever. Attendees of the brass band sits along the stairwell, playing some tunes for future practices.

Groups like those made the morning more euphonious for those in earshot. Somehow, it really sets the high school mood. It was hard to forget that it was Friday.

But then...

"Oof!" Sawamura stumbles back from the sudden collision and covers his nose that had been imposed.

He shifts his eyes up onto the tall bulky men he had accidentally barged onto and felt his soul leave his body.

It was a guy he commonly saw and heard about around the school. What are the odds that out of all the weaklings at the school he found him the most eligible to become a punching bag.

The 6'3 guy was staring Sawamura down with a dirty look on his face. His face was beating red and his eyes seemed as if they would jump out of their sockets at any second. Jesus.

"Who the hell do you think you are rudely bumping into me?" He barked in a loud tone. Sawamura shakes in fear and steps back a bit. He was still not use to the reality of this school.

He gulps but remains silent. "Tch, a pain in my ass! It's pussy's like you that can walk up on people bigger than you but then when they size you up you back in that damn hole of yours shitting your pants. Should I teach you a lesson about where your place is in this school, freshman?" The animosity he felt towards Sawamura was evident.

How inauspicious of the tenth grader to go through this on what he thought would be a good Friday.

"N-No-No! Thanks...I-I already have enough classes" Sawamura stammers and adjust the bag on his shoulder. He attempts to pass through the tall guy, but a hand cuts down in front of him from advancing any further.

The big jump he does was a pleasurable sight for the four surrounding him. "You think you're some witty mouthed freshman that I will simply allow to past by without a beating?" He scoffs.

Sawamura reluctantly nods, "That would be nice..." This makes the four laugh boisterously than he had ever been. Some students look over in turmoil but after receiving a death glare from one of the guys they all knew their place and stayed away.

"Come here, we will gladly make you rough around the edges if you think we will take you
"seriously" he grins and grips onto Sawamura's small wrist.

"Yeah don't worry, you'll know your place soon enough"

It was in twenty minutes where Sawamura finally found himself leaving the nurse department compacted between the main office and guidance.

The nurse that had aided him with the baseball incident from Monday was in today, surprised to see him back so early.

She winces at the bruises when he had walked in earlier, and instead of pressing on what had happened to him, she spent the next few minutes patching the black eye distinctive on his facade. He had a few hidden bruises on his stomach but that was it. She lets him rest for a few, and gives him some water to gulp down and an icepack to go over his eye. He dryly thanks her.

"How did this happen, Sawamura?" She had learned his name to be when checking him in. He doesn't answer for a few minutes, and instead, checks the time on the clock that had been loafing around on the wall.

He slides down from the cushioned bed he had been resting on and bolsters his bag upon his shoulder blade.

"Sawamura?" She questions again and enters the room from her office with a concerned look. Her hands are cupping the perimeter of the clipboard she was using to write his pass to class.

He sheepishly responds flatly, "Someone accidentally pushed me down the stairs" and he takes the slip from her hand and forces a weak smile on his face.

She didn't seem convinced but doesn't protest. "Well if anything happens, you can always talk with me“ she gives him an amiable smile before making sure he had everything and escorts him out of the building.

"Bye, nurse Aki" Sawamura says and dismisses himself off to class. As he walked out he could feel her eyes burning holes in the back of his neck. Though, he doesn't turn to prove his inquiry. The walk to his classroom is uncomfortably silent much for his liking.

It was common for him to become the bully's target. Everywhere he went someone always bothered, teased, or inflicted some sort of pain on him whether it was emotional, physical, or spiritual.

It never seemed to end either. No intermission in the everlasting chain was permissible from the gruesome years the brunette had severely endured on his own.

He hadn't known how it was possible for him to persistently be the one every top dog of the school went for.

Every turn he did, it was always someone wanting to beat him to smitherines for no apparent reason. Just because he happened to be there. Whether he was standing up for himself, others, or was walking by a scene too unbearable for his virgin eyes; it was him they all retaliated on.
It was a repeating sequence that Sawamura always found himself in the middle of. Most of the time he hadn't known why.

But he has never spoken up about it to anyone either. No one knows about the abusive beatings he gets on a regular basis from these guys. You'd think Mei would know, but he doesn't. The brunette clutches onto the sleeve of his sweater and grips tightly onto the item.

A squeak in shoes drags Sawamura out of his pained trance. In an instant, the brunette disposes of his icepack that he very much needed and pulls over the hoodie of his sweater. He didn't want anyone, no matter who it was, to know he had gotten hurt by those guys. Any signs of giving that fact away had to be rid of.

In the corner of his eye, as he is walking, Sawamura could see someone coming down the same hall as he was. He prayed to god he didn't seem inhumane to check on like an infected person in the movies trying to contain the virus inside them from turning.

Regardless of what he assumed to be perceived, he spots the footsteps curling over to him. When a familiar voice engulfs his ears, Sawamura scoots to the locker for comfort and speeds his pace up when he heard who it was. It was Miyuki.

'Just great, just what I needed to make this day even more hellish' Sawamura thought to himself in frustration.

"Eijun-kun, what is a innocent tenth grader like you doing in the halls? Don't you know what happens to freshman still out past first hour" the bespectacled brunette cackles as he stops the smaller male from proceeding onwards to his class by placing his hands on his shoulders.

Sawamura grinds his teeth at the mention of his first name exiting his mouth. But he refrains himself from caring, knowing very well Miyuki was trying to spark a reaction from him.

Miyuki pushes the subject more on him. "So bold of you, Eijun-kun, and I thought you were always a goody two shoes" he smirks cockily.

"Leave me alone" Sawamura barks and pulls himself away from Miyuki's hold and continues storming down the hall.

"Mad? You know, you look cute when you're angry" he pauses. "And that outfit says so as well"

He certainly got a reaction from that comment. Miyuki triumphantly grins at the brunette that had stopped midway from him, baffled by the statement.

His cheeks were furiously burning. "Miyuki Kazuya, you are in no form of authority to call me cute!" Sawamura bites on his lip to prevent a vulnerable shriek from escaping.

He was mentally seething to himself. His blood boiled at the mention of the annoying junior calling him such repugnant names.

He could hear Miyuki slowly creeping up behind him. "Are you some sort of business officer?" The warmth of his breath heats the fabric of his sweater. His lips inched in further to the point where they could both hear each other breathing. "Then you're going to have to arrest me, officer" Sawamura shivers at the seductive tone he was implementing. He was not making this situation any better.

Sawamura found no words to remark against the older male, and caught himself uncomfortably rummaging in his head for any type of rebuttle.
He opens his mouth to say something. Anything to make sure Miyuki didn't get the last word.

"Hey!" The moment was interjected with one of the administrators catching them. Sawamura felt his heart plunge into his throat.

Miyuki pulls back from Sawamura and gives a not-so-innocent smile. The smaller brunette steps further down the hall before turning halfway around.

"What are you two doing here this late during first hour?" The male interrogates as he approaches the two. Sawamura's jump went unnoticeable when he pondered about Miyuki's reason for being out in the halls in the first place. In fact, he still had his backpack on so lying about going to the bathroom was ruled to be invalid. His curiosity was high, but not as so.

"Sorry, I just got to school and found out my class would be in the lecture hall so I am making my way there now" Miyuki tells, though Sawamura couldn't tell if he was being deceitful or not. It was hard to tell when he was an everyday mendacious mystery.

"And you?" The administrator glares at Sawamura.

"I-I um..." Sawamura stammers as he pulls over his hoodie more so it covered his eye. "I have my pass right here, I came from the office" he lies. He didn't want Miyuki finding out he was sent to the nurse office. Who knows what kind of suffering he'll anticipate if he found out.

After a brief moment, the administrator cuts them loose. "Don't let me see you two out here again" and with that, Sawamura cautiously sprints down the hall before anything else was said.

He gets to his class without any further disruptions. After catching his breath (refusing use of his inhaler), Sawamura knocks on the door. About a minute past that he was left stranded out in the halls until the doors finally opened by the teacher. Without any words in regards to the teachers curiousity for him being late, Sawamura hands him the note and hurriedly shuffles to the only seat left. He drops his bag down beside his desk and withdraws his notebook and a pencil from inside. He makes sure to get the homework out as well.

As the teacher continues on with the lesson for the rest of the ten minutes left of class, Sawamura struggles to catch up. He doesn't ask for help, or accepts the help of the cordial, neighborly female that had kindly offered.

Instead, he just puts his things away and buries his head in his arms and waits for class to end. It's the least he could do with what Miyuki had said earlier to him burning alive in his head. "God he gives me the urge to throw the biggest rock at his ugly face"

The day dreaded on with much apprehension and trepidation for the solemn tenth grader. Classes dragged on slower than usual. He had missed out on lunch, not wanting to bump into those guys again and alternatively shelters himself in the library as a last resort. The tedious fatigue was slowly waning into the journalism class also, which Sawamura thought would never happen. But even in that class, Sawamura found himself spacing out every now and then or glancing at the clock watching time tick on until the restrain time they were kept there. It felt like solitary confinement if he had to admit. But if you were to ask Sawamura the highlight of his day on this 'glorious' Friday he would blatantly respond with "Being kept in bed until my alarm rung" or "Not running into Miyuki again". And it was the unspoken truth.

When the last bell rung, Sawamura somberly raises from his seat and throws his bag over his shoulder. Before he leaves the class a slight tug prevented him from doing so. He gazes down to see Haruichi looking at him in apprehension.
Sawamura indifferently returns the stare. "Are you okay? You were really quiet this hour" The pinklet asked worriedly as he lets go of his friend and continues on with the brunette and Furuya out of the class.

"I'm fine" The lie is bitter leaving his tongue. "You sure? We're use to the annoyingly loud Sawamura. Why do you suddenly look depress?" Kanemaru pops out from the other side of the brunette. Toujou was following close aside the blonde with his camera in hand.

Sawamura shifts his head down so they don't spot the black eye in his features. "I said I am fine" he snaps more spiteful. This change in tone alarms the small group.

"Well, if he says he's fine then he is" Furuya emotionlessly says with a blunt shrug. Haruichi is more taken off guard. "Furuya-kun!" He was hissing.

Sawamura ignores the indirective proclamations and leaves the four in the dust without them realizing his disappearance. The brunette is making his way to the train station, and as if he almost forgot about his plans with Mei, he gets a call from him. Sawamura reluctantly answers.

"Hope you didn't forget about me!" He exclaims excitedly into the phone. Sawamura closes his eyes for a brief moment before opening them again.

"You sound like the little chipmunk, Alvin, on helium after he drunk a cup of coffee" Sawamura dully remarks.

"And you sound like a pessimistic Eeyore with crippling depression but I ain't questioning it" A retort was quick to come from the bleached blonde. Sawamura smirks half-heartedly at the remark.

"That's rude Mei" Sawamura says as he stops with a pack of students at a red light. The brisk air of the chilly afternoon sweeps by, making Sawmura's hair flow around. He covers his available ear to hear his friend more.

"Okay, whatever. I don't want you turning this into a life lesson to guilt trip me. Are you almost at the station?" Mei inquires as Sawamura crosses the street. "Yeah, I didn't forget" Sawamura replies in the utmost excited voice he could muster.

"See ya in a few, okay? And leave that pit of darkness elsewhere. Don't bring it to me and ruin my day just because you aren't having a good one" Sawamura chuckles when he could imagine Mei sticking his tongue out, making that pique facade, his eyes squinted and brows cinching downwards. "How frank of you" Sawamura scoffs as he hangs up and shoves his phone in his pocket.

Before he heads to the train station, Sawamura enters a convience store nearby and pays for a scoop of ice cream for each of them. He buys himself plain vanilla whilst getting his best friend Rum Raisin, his favorite. It's a little thank you present for pitching in to help him search for a camera.

He leaves the money on the counter and bids the cashier goodbye and leaves the store. When he eventually gets to the train station, he immediately spots the short male sitting impatiently on the bench. Mei wore a black cap over his head, a predominant white sleeveless shirt with a hoodie. Red and blue stripes lined the shoulder sleeves and the hem of the shirt. An embroidery of #1 underneath the letter 'N' encased with red imprint is stitched on the far left side of his shirt; He also had on gray baggy joggers glueing into his red sneakers, and wore red armbands on his right arm. He seemed to be listening to music given the earbuds lacing in his ears.

But Sawamura couldn't get over his attire out from his school uniform. When they known each other two years ago, his whole wardrobe mainly consisted of faded shirts and stained jeans. Looking at
him now made him seem like some k-pop singer in cognito.

When Mei's eyes divert to the incoming brunette, wearing nothing short of his Seidou uniform, he evilly grins and pulls the plugs out of his ears while pushing himself out of his spot.

"It's about time you got here" Mei emphasizes with an overdramatic groan and playfully pushes himself into the brunette, who throws the blonde off.

He certainly didn't act as mature as he perceived to be.

"Well nice to see you too" Sawamura huffs as he hands the blonde his favorite ice cream. His eyes lit up from taking a small lick.

"Thanks Eijun! This afternoon already rocks! And speaking of rocks, is that what hit you on the way to get that massive black eye?" He tilts his head.

A blush creeps on the brunette's cheeks as he pulls back down his hoodie from over his head. No point in hiding it from someone as observant as he was despite having a low attention span.

"You could say" Sawamura heaves an exasperated sigh as they promenade onto a train to the nearest mall. Mei wasn't pleased with the answer.

"Did someone beat you up?" He subtly assumes correctly as he takes a seat next to the younger male. Mei continues to lick at his ice cream, engrossed at it's enticing flavor. Given the looks, it's been a while since he last had it.

Sawamura remains quiet, ",", Mei grabs his cheeks from the response. "Who did it?" He asked darkly with a black aura engulfing his body. Sawamura's eyes widen by the change of personality.

"It was no one! I was pushed down the stairs and landed on my eye at the edge of a step" the tenth grader tries to coax the junior into accepting the 'truth', but Mei was persistent. "Is that the lie you've been telling everyone?" Mei uses a deep menacing tone that echos throughout the cart they were sitting in. They were starting to get wary glares in their direction.

"You're a psycho!" Sawamura cries out as he pulls away from his friend and goes back to eating his ice cream. "TM a psycho??" Mei places a hand on his chest and makes a pained expression in mockery of how anyone would normally feel. His smile is faultless, face conniving as always.

Now Mei was giving a superior smirk. "Is that how you talk to a friend you haven't seen since your graduation? His teeth shows as he pokes Eijun in the cheek. Sawamura gapes at his friend and grabs at his free wrist.

"You were only there at the end, what do you mean?!!" Sawamura defends himself.

"At least I showed up! You want to know who didn't show up? That ugly black mark monopolizing your eye!" Mei retaliates, not entirely infatuated by the whole get up of his friend's swelling eye. It was such a horrendous sight. Sawamura scowls at the look he was receiving from his friend and pushes him away. He proceeds to licking his ice cream. "Aw, am I making little Eijun Wijun insecure?" Mei snickers at the inaudible figure currently ignoring the notorious blonde.

With continuing silence, Mei rolls his eyes and subsequently continues to chow down his ice cream as well when feeling it melt onto his hands. "Gosh you're easy to tick off" Mei is heard snickering beside him and props his legs over his friend and lays back in his seat and onto his bag for support. Sawamura doesn't push them off so Mei found it as an opportunity to rest.
Sawamura eyes him mischievously. Mei notices and makes contact with him and smirks. "You're the worst" The brunette spat and looks away out the window to avoid any further conflict. 

"Probably worser than him" the tenth grader cringes again at the thought and shakes the image away from his head. No, no one was worse than that guy.

A few minutes after the train concludes the trip from coming to the end point, the two leisurely walks out from the train and spends the rest of the afternoon looking for a high quality camera for Sawamura's yearbook class. During the time Mei is elated as he checks out different cameras from different shops, eyes big as saucers and mouth widening from ear to ear. Even though Sawamura is helping check out the quality and the statistics of the camera, smiling every now and then, and joking around with Mei to keep in character, his mind was wondering somewhere else.

And Mei notices.
Anywhere; Everywhere, At The Wrong Moment

Chapter Summary

Miyuki always seems to bring up the past in Sawamura no matter what he says.

The sound of the lunch bell ringing echoes in the ears of all hungry. Sawamura heaves a sigh that clung to his chest ever since he came into the last morning class that deprives him of all energy he had arrived to school with. His head is stuck to the desk he had been laying on, eyes droopy and body drained. The fatigue of last night's work shift getting the best of him. He had fought off most of his exhaustion through the morning, however, he couldn't quite contain himself the second his International history teacher started blabbering about the imperialism and nationalism of many countries taking over one.

His body felt like stone. Blood--steel; and organs--metal. The brunette's shoulders are nothing more but added built up tension from the stressors he fears; and as it weighs itself onto his aching crouched back, the staggering pain inclined onto his muscles and joints, every movement he constructed made him wheeze and groan, thus keeping him on his desk even when the class has ended.

The position he kept himself in came off more comfortable when he stretches himself to adjust into a more reliable stance. An overwhelmed hum reverberates his jaw as a wave of gratification washes over him from the pop of his joints sounding out loud. In contrast to what he had felt like a few minutes ago, this, now, was nothing more than the total opposite. A good stretch was what he needed to relieve such rigidity dwelling onto him.

The sound of the door closing silences any other movements he would have subsequently made. And the click of shoes forces him to lay his head up. The lids of his eyes shake to open, fist are clenched and his mouth is slightly ajar for a yawn to leave his lips. He relaxes, and just as the golden irises--that are his eyes-- are salient enough, the physique approaching him comes to a stop at his desk and smiles.

Contact is made the second Sawamura's eyes focused. The blurs of his vision is blinked away and finalizes on the pinklet in front of him.

His tinted cheeks and the ends of his lips curling into a small smile are perceived. Sawamura let's another yawn leave his lips. "You fell asleep again" the pinklet's voice engulfs the brunette's ears, and he meekly nods and dabs his fisted knuckles at his eyes.

"So I see" Sawamura finds himself stretching again. "What are you doing to make you sleep so much?" Haruichi inquires as he folds his arms over the waistline of his school pants. Sawamura stands from his desk in the back of the class and hauls his bag up onto his shoulder.

He felt lightheaded from laying down the entire time, nearly losing his balance, the brunette places his fingers on the desk to not fall over.

He gazes over at his friend and scoffs,"Don't worry about it.." Not wanting to inform his friend about his teenage working lifestyle, he disregards the question.

Instead, he switches the topic so they aren't fixated on him. "Wanna grab some lunch together?"
Haruichi nods obligingly, his smile not failing to dismiss. The two exits the class together and makes their way to the cafeteria.

Haruichi was the first to make conversation once they were in the hall. "A birdie told me you got your camera?" He fiddles with the end sleeve of his shirt. Sawamura turns to look at his friend. He smiles.

"Yeah! It isn't much, but my friend and I bought a good camera for a low price. It was amazing that we got the last one" Sawamura coos as he pulls his bag over to show the pink haired male his camera for yearbook.

He rummages through the bag. "That's cool, now you can attend the games. All you have to do is not procrastinate" Haruichi beams. Sawamura flinches at the mention of one of his characteristics. He tended to be a huge procrastinator when it came to assignments and projects. But he loved yearbook so taking pictures wasn't a big deal. "However, comma, there is a huge obstacle obstructing me from getting to take pictures" Sawamura remarks as he whips out his camera and closes his bag. Haruichi takes the device in his hands and scrutinizes the piece of equipment. He hums, "Which is?" Haruichi pointedly persist. They entered through the double doors of the cafeteria.

"I don't get along with a certain equivalent entity that's self-indulgence is my misery" Sawamura sneers. The rapturous chatter of the students assembling in small bits of groups is roaring in the ears of the ones that enter. The mixture aura of the school food stings at the tenth graders nostrils. They squish themseleves through the crowd of hungry individuals roaming blissfully around.

It was quite annoying but nevertheless they made it to the front of the line. "Are you referring to...?"

"A certain primate that no one should dare mention!" Sawamura scowls. His eye twitches with such boiling indignation and his teeth grinds together. Haruichi blinks blankly.

"For someone who really hates said individual you sure do talk about...him a lot" Haruichi says as he hands his friend back his camera and gathers the food he wants. He takes a plate of salad and another full of noodles. Then, grabs a drink of spring water.

Sawamura ignores his friend and pays for his lunch when he came to the cashier. Who wouldn't talk about their enemy? It happens in the movies. He also felt as if he was obligated to tell at least one of his friends everything building up inside of him. He just couldn't stand the snarky year older teen.

"I guess" he furrows his brows. The two leaves the line once Haruichi pays for his food and saunters away to look for a table to sit at. Most are occupied by groups of teams like the Football players or the Brass band. Some groups (mainly composed of seniors) just gossiped away about graduation and what they would do once they did leave the school. Then there were the groups of nerds who actually gave a damn about their studies. Papers scattered the table, no food trays around. Only pens of a variety of colors being used to anecdote works of many subjects.

However, through all the ruckus of looking for a table in the most accompanied building, the two spotted a table where familiar faces sat at. The place was hardly isolated but enough for them to not be heard. The two makes their way over, and when the group see's them they all greeted each other warmly.

"Hey Kominato and Sawamura" Toujou says as he swallows the mouthful of food he had been chewing. "Hello" Haruichi waves innocently as he takes a seat beside the jet haired tenth grader.

The blonde's eyes avert from the pinklet to Sawamura and they narrow. "Why do you look cranky,
Sawamura?" Kanemaru asked as he puts a spoonful of his Sashimi in his mouth.

Everyone steals a quick glance--excluding Haruichi. The brunette jumps at how quick their attention was diverted and feels his cheeks burn. He looks down to avoid the stairs and takes a small bite of his gastronomical food. His cheeks burned more. And not from the food. It's because he knew that his friends were still looking at him. It was hard to swallow when his food had fully mushed up. But he roughly does so, and leans his elbows onto the table.

"He's still provoked by getting the baseball spread. His burning animosity for Miyu-"

"Don't you say it!" Sawamura barked. Haruichi pauses then turns to the brunette and gave him a look.

He slowly turns back to the curious two before him, though with being abruptly cut off like that, the two had a good clearance for what the idea might be. "His hostility towards the dude with glasses is still subtle" Haruichi quickly finishes.

Kanemaru rolls his eyes whilst his friend tilts his head. "Don't you two have quite the history coming into high school with complications" Toujou chuckles.

Sawamura's grip on his spoon tightens. "He's the worse human being in existence!"

There seemed to be no conciliating him. No one tried to.

"So we've heard" Kanemaru quips, feeling indifferent towards the matter. Toujou elbows him in the side. He always seemed to be the line of impartiality to every dispute that would have erupted between the two if he hadn't been there.

Sawamura didn't seem to have heard though. "He's so insolent!" He retorts.

"And you are loud and obnoxious" Toujou hits his blonde friend again in his side. And it was again that Sawamura didn't hear the direct insult shot to him. He continues spitting out spiteful comments about the brunette with glasses. His eyes were animatedly white, brows wrinkling together to form chains of many creases on his forehead, and his mouth seemed bigger than his own deflated ego.

"Oh, don't they have a game tomorrow?" Toujou recollects as he pulls his hand back from when it was grabbed by Kanemaru so he wouldn't be jabbed again. The statement snaps Sawamura out of his smoldering repressed rage.

Haruichi gasped as if he made plans to go. Which was likely since his brother was on the team.

"Yeah, It's the end of the qualifiers. The Fall tournament begins in like a good week or so" the pinklet enlightens.

"Aren't you two excited? TJ get's to work with the cheerleaders and Kominato has the brass band. Sawamura...has problems, but you three will be traveling altogether, just on separate buses"

Kanemaru submits with envy. The orange haired male nods.

"I get to go see every Brass bands recitals and their plays at games, be it football or baseball! It's very alluring" Haruichi gushes.

"And the girls are quite nice. They welcome me with warm arms all the time and include me in their meetings for suggestive chants" Toujou scratches his reddening cheeks.

"Yeah yeah yeah! You all get the happy fairy tale endings while I get dirt stuck in my hair and socks!" Sawamura rants.
"So overdramatic" Kanemaru remarks distinctively. He prayed the heavens Toujou didn't hear his sly comment or else he might end up getting hip surgery.

"How are all of your other spreads?" Furuya finally speaks up from the daze he was in. Haruichi jumps from beside him, not noticing he was awake. "Ah...Furuya-kun, don't scare me like that" he apologizes sincerely though his face didn't quite concluded that.

"Track and Football isn't quite what I had in mind. I am apart of the yearbook club, however, I have people ordering me around like I am some sort of water boy" Kanemaru grumbles with malice.

"Volleyball is alright for me. I got hit in the face. And wrestling: everyone sweats" Furuya scrunches his nose. His comment was very perfunctory.

Toujou spoke up next with a raised hand. "Basketball is alright. I am much more happier with cheerleading though; they send positove energy" a benevolent smile traces his lips.

Kanemaru incoherently mumbles foul words under his breath. Toujou just restrains the smile on his face, albeit, it seemed like he wanted to end his blonde friend for his impertinent behaviour these past few minutes. Haruichi let's the thick tension between the two dissipate by saying his input in the other two spreads he was working with.

"Drama is quite fun. Watching them act is another form of art like music so I am not complaining, and so far homecoming isn't in another three weeks so I am not much stressing about that spread" Haruichi stretched his arms out.

Toujou's eyes widen. And the brunette arches an unknowing brow. "It must be tough working three spreads" the organge haired male sympathizes. Haruichi just shrugs though and lays his head onto his palm. "It keeps me busy" he turns to his rambunctious friend that seemed to have cooled down now.

He asks, "How is community service?" To the tenth grader, who ponders if he's actually contributed his time with that part of his assignment. He had totally forgotten that he was assigned two spreads and mentally slaps himself. He was definitely a procrastinator. Big time.

"I-It's good" he lies nervously. Sawamura occupies himself by munching down on the last bit of his food when the bell for lunch to end rings. The five gets up from the table they sat at and one-by-one tosses their leftover food in the trash.

They all walked out the building together. Through the commotion of everyone rushing to their class the small group slips through one of the more vacant halls. "I'll see you all last period" Kanemaru waves from beside Toujou. Haruichi and Furuya meekly does the same before dismissing themselves from Sawamura, who makes his way to his class alone. The trip is quite hurried. He pushes himself past people to make it to the tenth grade building where his class was kept.

"Hey, watch where you're going!" A girl snapped when some random person backed into Sawamura making him push his body onto the female trying to get back. She glares menacingly at the brunette who seemed more demure now that he wasn't angry or dysfunctional.

"U-Uh, sorry..." She had longed walked away without hearing the apology. Biting back on his lips, Sawamura sped into his room before he was pummelled by any other threatening sources.

He takes his seat into the third row fifth column when he enters the threshold and begins to pull out his notebook and some pencils. The teacher was at the desk sipping on some coffee, that filled the room, while typing away on his computer with his free hand. The students entering the room were all
either revitalized from talking with their friends when eating lunch or derivatived from the long
tedious hours of school already imposing on them.

When hearing the mention of last night's work, Sawamura takes out his homework as well and irons
out the little bits of wrinkles with his hand. As he waits for the late bell to ring, a shadow projects
onto the brunette's body. He slightly turns in his seat and looks up to see the guy from two days back
that had gave him a black eye. He jumps a bit when taking notice. "U-U-Um-" the guy quiets him by
scooping his hand down. Sawamura flails himself back in his seat and watches as he takes the paper
from his desk into his hand. His homework.

The guy is quiet. His eyes are scanning the paper Sawamura has worked on last night till two in the
morning after coming off his night shift from the family restuarant. Sawamura watches him with
apprehension and only wishes for the bell to ring faster so he could leave.

Sawamura see's his eyes come to a hault. A few seconds past before the small black orbs flicker
down to his golden ones. The brunette stiffens up in his seat.

His reaction makes the guy smirk knowing he had control over the poor soul. "This seems about
accurate. I'll be taking it" he snickers. Sawamura's eyes dilated.

"Hey! You can't take that, I've been up all night do-" the hard glare he was giving the tenth grader
forces him to fall quiet. Without another word the guy ruffles Sawamura's hair like he was a dog. He
clenches his shirt. It felt so hot. Like he was being suffocated; choked even.

It didn't startle him when he came to terms with how much of a coward he was. How he didn't (and
can't) stick up for himself no matter the situation. That he knew all too well; He was always the one
to suffer.

Sawamura takes a few breathes to ease his irregular heart rate. He had to calm himself or else
someone might notice and call him out. "Alright class pull out your homework, we'll dive right into
the lesson when I am done collecting your work" The teacher announces and begins to traipse
around the classroom.

The tenth grader's heart was in his ears the closer the teacher got to his row; to him. It was nervewrecking.
He clenches tighter to his shirt when he felt his breathing increase. It was so sultry.

**Step! Step!**

The silhouette of the teacher's frame stops at his desk from behind. A patient petite hand sprawled
out in front of him.

It only felt like mere seconds that he had walked by the first four rows by his side of the desk. But
now he was already here--and in reality it's only been two minutes.

The tenth grader's breath hitches. "Sawamura, your work please" the teacher orders and beckons for
him to give it by swaying his compacted fingers back and fro. Sawamura felt his stomach churn. The
class is silent as they waited for him to do so.

A deep snort was heard from far in the back.
"I-I don't have it..." Sawamura inarticulately laments in a subdued tone.

The teacher doesn't say anything for a moment and that fills the tenth grader with even more trepidation. Just like that, the teacher moves on with the next student, demanding their work. The student complies and the process repeats from there.

Sawamura felt something unsettling enter his stomach. A sickening taste that was in his throat, like he had eaten something bad.

When he is done collecting the work he advances to today's lesson. Sawamura blanked out through part of it, more focused on the burning sensation on the nape of his neck. He could feel that guy staring ominously at him, watching his every movement from behind. It made Sawamura feel uneasy, so when he did try to pay attention to the lesson he found himself lost and struggling to wrap his head around the concept of even the most specific details. It was all too explicit for Sawamura to comprehend altogether. And for some reason he felt like everyone was looking at him. The bully; the students; the teacher. Even if he was facing the board to write down something he could still feel it. Like he had eyes at the back of his head.

He recollects himself multiple times throughout the next few minutes. But it was in vain. He still didn't get what was happening, and feeling targeted didn't make things better.

The sound of his teacher calling him snaps Sawamura out of his thoughts. He becomes stiff again and tenses. "Y-Yes?" He stammers sheepishly. Now everyone was looking at him.

"You should answer the question. You seem to be very intrigued in the lesson" He emphasizes with derision. Some snickers were heard around the class. Sawamura felt his face beam bright red.

"U-Um..." He stutters more, trying to recap what the question was.

Before he could be any more mortified, a knock at the door is pronounced. Annoyed, the teacher stomps over to the door, wondering what nuisance was disturbing the class with only so much minutes left.

Everyone watches with curiosity at it's highest when the click of the door signals it's opening. "What do you want? I am running a class" the teacher reprimands.

"I can see that, we are in school after all" a snicker follows by. The voice sounded vaguely familiar to Sawamura. And it hurts him that he doesn't seem to remember despite talking about the being every few minutes. The figure allows himself in without any proper welcome and smirks when his eyes fell on the golden eyed teen. Sawamura flinched when they made contact.

Some talk was going on. Girls were swooning about his body and facial features while the guys were rolling their eyes with jealousy at the attention he was giving. One couple that shared the class; the guy was glaring at his girlfriend that was staring too long for him to stomach. "Show off" one guy muttered.

"He's so cute! I'll have him head over heels for me in a week" the girl next to Sawamura whispers.

Sawamura animatedly looks at everyone mesmerized by the baseball player dressed in his gaming attire. "No, stop it! You are only amplifying his ego!!" Sawamura clenches his teeth and jerks his head in the second years direction.

What was good about him wearing a blue undershirt that tightened around his muscular arms? His medium sized shirt on top clinging to his body and his pants tightening around his thick legs...? And the way his baseball goggles allowed everyone to perceive his glistening amber colored eyes much
more better. His shitty grin lining up on his lips as he pretends to not be fazed by the lurking comments about him, and that shaggy hair of his hidden by his Seidou blue cap?

Sawamura wasn't seeing it at all and it was pissing him off that everyone quickly falls for him like they were being put under a spell.

"You can't just barge into here like that unannounced young man, learn some decency you impudent stud-" Miyuki snaps his head in his direction in annoyance.

"Mr. Kataoka needs Sawamura" he points to the brunette and that statement makes him freeze up. Sawamura blinks at the sudden reaction.

At first he seemed so big and bold when demanding for work. But at the mention of the stern baseball coach he seem to have lost his shit.

"He must know him..." Sawamura thought as he remembers the appearance of the stoic man. Who could forget someone that seem to have the school under his foot? Which brought him to his next question.

"Wait, why does he want me now?" Sawamura can't remember doing a bad deed that was making him head to the office. But now he was starting to recap.

Even the students around him were whispering amongst each other. Some were talking about Mr. Kataoka and how he was like a reincarnation of Medusa. Others (mainly girls) were groaning about how lucly Sawamura was to be leaving with someone as cute as Miyuki as the escort. "I'd know what I would do to him if I was the one leaving" one of the girls stated rather loudly. Sawamura gags at this and makes a face. "You are all repulsive" he thought bitterly.

The teacher snaps his head where Sawamura was, a loud crack echos the room. "Go" he spat and trudges over back to the boars to recommence the lesson before the bell rung.

The tenth grader gulps as he places his things away and pulls his bag over his shoulder. He felt relieved to be leaving his class, especially when he was about to answer the wrong answer to an unknown question. Miyuki is grinning, holding the door open for the anxious teen.

Sawamura could still hear the daunting comments about what he could possibly be needed for. "Tch, why does the famous Miyuki remember the name of a nobody?" One girls spits with disdain.

This makes the brunette feel even more insecure. It was bad enough his familiy was working hard to pay for the tuition of his attendance. Why did he have to be looked down for wanting to go to a higher tier school like Seidou?

Once they were in the hallways Miyuki closes the door and turns to him. He was still smiling and that grew annoying rather quickly.

"You're an audacious brat" Sawamura remarks as he follows the taller male to the office. Miyuki looks down beside him with interest. "Why is that?" He hums, his jaw vibrates.

"You just don't storm into my class demanding me while dress like your going to the batting cages" Sawamura sneers. Miyuki chuckles at his answer.

"Did I embarrass you or something?" His voice is heinous. With them being the only ones in the dim hall Miyuki really did seem scary. Sawamura scrunches his face up.

"Please, how could I be embarrassed with everyone fixated on you?" He mutters incoherently.
Miyuki hums with question while the smaller brunette's cheeks boiled at what he just said.

"N-No, scratch that!" He exclaims.

The shine of Miyuki's frames reflected. "Is someone jealous that the girls were talking about me?" He cackles with his arms folded.

"No! Stop assuming crap, I only protested because I knew you'd take it as fuel to your enormous self-esteem!" Sawamura argues as they walked to the faculty department.

"I'm only perceiving it in the way it sounded Ei" He snickers. Sawamura glares up at him. "Don't. Call. Me. That" he bellows in a threatening tone that would have made his friends speechless. But it doesn't waver Miyuki, use to seeing this side of him.

"Aren't we friends th-"

"We are not friends!" He quickly chims in.

"Ouchie, Ei, that struck a nerve" Miyuki cackles as they entered a different building. One where all the administrators and faculty members worked. Sawamura watches as those amber eyes of his travel down to meet his. They both stared at each other, Miyuki with amusement and Sawamura with sheer malice. The smaller brunette breaks the contact between them and stares bluntly at the door they stopped at.

Miyuki snaps his eyes back up opens the lock doors with one of the keys he was given. Allowing himself in first this time, cutting in front of the younger male, the inarticulate mutters he heard was comical. Miyuki laughs.

He gets in one of the office chairs and strolls himself over to the man doing paperwork. "I got him, coach" he states as he rides by.

Sawamura slowly walks in, unsure of what to do. The office is empty. Two columns of separated desk aligns at the center. When coming in the first thing beside the wall is a small row of steel bins. Next to that was a water dispenser and a mahogany desk with manila folders stacked neatly onto each other. More bins on the opposite end of the table. The carpet is a peacock blue and the wallpaper is a faded blue. On the wall adjacent the one when you come in holds three other computer stations. Then the wall across from Sawamura holds the windows concealed with flexible blinds. There is also a door that Miyuki passed by that read "Faculty Lounge" perfectly embellished on a golden plaque.

The air smelt of scented vanilla cream and freshly printed paper. It was quite cozy.

Sawamura catches the coach sitting at his desk. Face still stern but the softest he has seen it. He is wearing a tight white button up with a blue tie, black dress pants and black church shoes covered by the walls of the desk. He was dressed up so professional.

Not knowing what to say, Sawamura plainly greets him. Still curious why he was here. "Um, good afternoon" he amicably says.

He steps further into the office and hesitantly takes a seat not far from the two. Miyuki is spinning in the chair leisurely with his legs tucked in. The brunette watches as Miyuki do so, and rolls his eyes at his childish behavior.

The coach is still jotting down a few things from the stack of papers in front of him. Sawamura felt awkward for not having a response from the strict man.
The bell rings, indicating the end of fifth period. Sawamura rose his brow when he realized he still had a good two more classes to attend before school was over. He didn't want to be accused of skipping from his classmates that have seen him throughout the day.

The coach lays his pen down and files the papers away that he was working on. "Don't worry about it, Sawamura. Your sixth period teacher knows you won't be there. I sent her an email" the brunette looks at the older man that was now standing.

The stress had soon evanesce. "Oh...thanks" Sawamura thoughtfully smiles.

"Now, we didn't call you here just to let you skip classes and meddle" Kataoka contemptuously scowls. Sawamura froze in place. That had never much crossed his mind. Though it wasn't a bad idea either--being called out early for whatever reason. But what he says didn't go amiss. His eyes slowly trailed over to Miyuki, who had stopped swaying in his seat. The back of his chair is faced towards him so Sawamura couldn't properly make out his form. Yet, he could still see his arms propped around the back of his head for support. "We?" He thinks to himself as he looks back at the coach.

Some of the workers were filing out of the lounge beyond the door. Some greeted the prominent male and even Miyuki. "Geez, he's even got the staff members under his spell" Sawamura rolls his eyes when ons of the workers held a brief conversation with him.

Once the office was cleared again and the late bell had rung, the room falls silent.

"Miyuki, can you get the box?" The coach asked. A subtle hum leaves his lips. He throws himself off his chair and walks on the other side of the room that makes him invisible from Sawamura's point of view.

Sawamura was filled with apprehension again. When he see's Miyuki reveal himself from around the corner carrying a brown package, the brunette began to wonder. He watches as Miyuki places the box beside him, and retrieves the scissors that his coach graciously offered. After cutting the package open Miyuki opens the folds to the box.

Before he pulls anything out, Miyuki glares at him. Sawamura scooted his chair back, thinking he was going to kill him or something and that whatever was in the box was a weapon. Miyuki takes notice of his overdramatic manner.

"Before I even show you what's in here, big head, I just want you to know it was the captains, Tetsu's, idea, not mine" The coach gives him a wary look that Miyuki disregards.

Sawamura smiles, ignoring the comment about his head. He's been doing that a lot lately. "What a relief" he sighs in a cute hum. Miyuki narrows his eyes at the brunette but then smirks.

"If I were to have an idea, it'd be much more venereal" He winks at Sawamura, who's cheeks brightened. He wasn't that densed to get the hint. The coach coughs, unamused.

Miyuki rolls his eyes. "Regardless, the whole team thought it was a good idea since you are going to stick with us until our season is over" He says as he shoves his hands in the box.

Sawamura was starting to get nervous but exhilarated at the same time.

He watches as Miyuki extracts some items from the box. He empties it and then places the light item on the ground. The first thing he pulled out was a book like item. He projects it to the tenth grader in front of him. It was a dark blue book with yellow imprint, titled "Seidou Memories". Sawamura felt a warm feeling enter his stomach.
"Tetsu and Jun thought that whatever pictures you don’t decide to put in the baseball spread shouldn’t be wasted. So along with pictures of your friends, if you have any, or any other occasional event, you can put in here" He tells and hands the photo album to Sawamura.

The next item he pulls out is a personalized water bottle. It had the Seidou colors and the names of every first string member written down one half of the tubular plane. "You know, in case you get thirsty. It's what Kominato wanted me to say when I gave this to you" Miyuki snickers when he finally got the vulgar joke and gives the bottle away. Sawamura takes it in his hand and examines the object, taking a look at the names.

"Oh look, your name is at the top" Sawamura grins mischeviously.

"Yeah, don't read too much into that" Miyuki retorts and takes the next item. This one makes Sawamura really go ‘awe’. His eyes fall over the design of the shirt the second year was holding up. It was the back that mattered the most. Yeah, the front was a dominant white and had the school name embroidered at the left corner and seemed like a normal Seidou baseball shirt, but on the back it had his last name printed in black. His number was 0 and underneath had "Seidou photographer". It was smaller than his name.

"That's so cool!" Sawamura gushes as he takes the shirt. Now he was starting to consider loving having been assinged the baseball spread. The team gave him things. Holding the shirt in his hand made him excited for any game.

"Yeah, I actually wanted to buy you, like body armor, because your body is frail but they all disagreed" Miyuki scoffed.

Sawamura glowered at him. But he couldn't fully commit to it knowing that he also pitched in helping the team buy all this for him. He felt quite honored that they thought about him.

He glances at the merchandise in his lap and swoons. They were all so well designed. The team was very discerning.

Sawamura actually felt bouyant. It's been a while since things went right for him apart from being accepted into the school.

"Thanks so much coach!" Sawamura beams. The coach smirks while Miyuki's eye twitched. "Do I get a thanks?" He asked lowering himself to Sawamura's level. He was weirdly close that Sawamura could smell the minty scent of his breath. His voice was malevolent.

The tenth grader pushes himself back on his rolling office chair and gets up. "No, you wanted to get me body armor" Sawamura remarks as he collects his new items and nearly puts them into his bag.

"I'm just saying, in practice you were knocked conscious from a ball I threw at almost 98 miles per hour. Did you fall hard to get that hideous black eye? Got to admit it's kind of fitting" Miyuki stuck his tongue out.

Sawamura felt his throat tighten. He had forgotten about Miyuki not knowing about his black eye. It had gone down a bit but it was still easily detectable.

Memories of the day prior to the previous one sprints back to his mind. He remebered being dragged into the bathroom, being brutally kicked into his stomach with only minimum bruises and punched in the same eye twice.

He knew this would happen.
He knew if Miyuki saw his black eye he would make fun of him. It hurt more that he was truthfully wrong for assuming that he had gotten it from falling.

"You should wear black eyes more often" That signature cheeky grin of his comes to play.

Sawamura felt his blood boil. Whenever something went right for him Miyuki was there at the perfect moment to ruin it. That's what Miyuki was known for. And that's how it's always been.

Instead of saying anything, Sawamura grabs his bag. "See you at the game tomorrow" he inarticulates montonously to the coach and runs out the office without any other words left, leaving Miyuki puzzled.

"Was it something I said?" He asked aloud to the coach, who only shakes his head in disappointment.
The Smile That Hurts Him Inside

Chapter Summary

It's the last day of the preliminaries and Sawamura is excited to finally be going somewhere other than school or his own place.

Chapter Notes

Sorry I have not updated in a little bit!!! School is STRESSFUL!! Also, sorry for any mistakes (which there is probably a lot because I am tired and lazy as of now to edit them), I will be changing them.....eventually.....hehe...

Anyway enjoy the story!!

When Saturday morning came, Sawamura was merely confused on why his alarm was going off. It's blaring noise rings in the highly disturbed teen's ear at such rude awakening that he couldn't even hear himself think. Any thought from the previous day where he was compelled to setting an alarm was all a blur. He can't even remember what he ate for dinner last night or how he ended up in his bed.

Normally, Sawamura's Saturday morning consisted him of getting all the sleep he missed out on during the week of working a late night shift and kept by opting to finish his homework for class.

It was natural that he slept all Saturday, enjoyed the nice ten quick hours before stuffing his face with a small meal that he could stomach. After spending most of his years working at the family restuarant he had grown completely disgusted towards the smell of freshly stewed buckwheat noodles of soba, the grilled Yakitori, and the strong fishy smell of Himono. It was common for him to simply cook a small bowl of rice and call it a day. After eating portion of his food, he'd take a lukewarm shower to ease his aching legs that felt like fifty pound weights from his tedious walking schedule of going to and from the mobile station. Afterwards, he would finish whatever weekend homework assigned to him and head back to bed.

Sawamura enjoyed those peaceful Saturday's. So it came as his number one priority that morning to figure out why the hell his alarm was going off profusely. He shuffles around begrudgingly in his messy bed, tugging the blankets with every movement he initiated.

The slits of his eyes slowly open when he hears his alarm fall quiet; and all he could think about was, "finally" before intaking a chug of air.

The sun stings in his eyes when they open, causing him to wince. The brunette peels himself from the shining rays the sun was blasting at his face through the windows and rose up on his knees. He shuffles around begrudgingly in his messy bed, tugging the blankets with every movement he initiated.

The sun stings in his eyes when they open, causing him to wince. The brunette peels himself from the shining rays the sun was blasting at his face through the windows and rose up on his knees. He composes himself to not lose balance, but ultimately slouches against the wall and forces the curtains shut (which were beside his bed).

Darkness swept over the room. It wasn't completely dark since the sun was out and shun eerily
through the silky curtains, but it was comfortable to say so the least.

As he climbs off his bed, Sawamura realizes that he was still dressed in the same clothes from yesterday. "Geez it's hot" he thought to himself as he grabs ahold of his phone from the counter of the nightstand. His brows knits together when he see's the unhealthy amount of notifications broadcasting on his phone only minutes ago.

Confused, he unlocks his phone and opts to answer the first person messaging him. However, before he could reply, a call pops up on the screen. He sighs, and answers the call as he flops back down on his bed, resting his eyes while he does so. The brunette runs a distressed hand through his unkempt hair when listening to the loudness of the other line. From what he could decipher through the havoc of excessive shuffling, statics, and instruments, Sawamura could only assume Haruichi was listening to some famous band choir on his TV. But why is it so loud?

Impatient with waiting, Sawamura answers with a smug, "Hello?" And rolls over in his bed sideways.

It didn't take long for a reply, thankfully. "Eijun-kun, where are you?" Haruichi's tone is full of stress and anxiety. But a hint of elation lingered through the mixture.

Sawamura lays up in his bed for comfort. "What do you mean? I'm home" he replies dryly as if it wasn't obvious enough. Where could he possibly be at seven in the morning?

A slight pause escalates for a moment. Then, a few inaudible voices follows up. "Harucchi" Sawamura barely shouts into his phone, not trying to wake his neighboring relatives sleeping nearby.

"Why aren't you at Seidou? Did you forget??" Haruichi asked. Sawamura grew puzzled from the question, but he doesn't let that wake him up from his little rest. "Why the hell would I be at school? It's Saturday!" The brunette grumbles in exasperation as if the pinklet hadn't already known that. The sly comment of "No shit", a voice that did not match up with Haruichi's, sneaks in over the line.

Sawamura groans, knowing he had gotten himself involved in something. The events of last night was still foggy for him to grasp what happened. Now on his feet, he began pacing his room in a leisure manner. He was too deprived of energy to do anything. And yet, his friend was assuming his presence to be glued to school by now? He wasn't too much of a scholar like that to spend the night and haunt the teachers to change his grade.

"So you forgot about the game? The baseball game that YOU have to go to to take pictures? They have a game today!" Sawamura almost dropped his phone at the mention of today's schedule. He wasn't suppose to sleep in tonight.

As if on que, the five minutes that have passed in the meantime intervenes the call with his alarm going off. It was 7:10 in the morning and his morning message read: Get ready for the baseball game! The bus is leaving in two hours!

Sawamura mutters a curse to himself as he turns his alarm off. He swipes his phone back up to his ear. "I am on my way right now! I totally forgot!" He apologizes as he pulls out random clothes from his closet and jolts into the bathroom. "Just hurry up! The game starts at 11, we are leaving by 9 and have to be at the Jingu stadium by 10:15!" The pinklet chastised.

Sawamura hangs up the phone as he locks himself in the bathroom. The next few moments were of him hurriedly getting ready for an event that was important for him, the alternate of the baseball spread, to be at.
The thought of running late and making a bad first impression was too much embarrassment alone for him to bare. To be punished at the wrath of the coach and treated like one of the 'dogs' was a relationship he did not want to be apart of.

It takes three minutes for Sawamura to wash himself clean completely, another five to roughly slip into the clothes after partially drying himself, and another ten to look for socks. He brushes his teeth and sprints back into his room so that he was sure he had everything needed for the game. He made sure he had his camera, his pass to get on the bus, and supplies he had apparently packed last night.

Sawamura made sure he was good to go the second he is walking out the door of his house. "And where are you going?" His overprotective mom asked while blindly tying an apron around her waist.

The teen comes to a stop, hands covering the knob as he turns to his mother that seemed to be in the middle of cooking. Her skin in fairly pale, brown eyes shimmering meticulously, and lips pulled into a tight frown as she dries her hands on the lace of her apron.

His grandpa, who had been watching something on the staticity, old-aged television, was peeking up at him behind his burgundy shades.

Sawamura slides his phone into his butt pocket. "Out. I'll be back in a few" he hastily answers while opening the door. He was lucky his mom believe him given the way he was crazily dressed and his drenched hair. She sighs, "Be safe" and walks back into the kitchen, adding, "I'll save you a plate".

Sawamura gives her a grateful smile and unknowingly slams the door shut and rushes down the streets, completely oblivious to the side comment his grandpa made about him actually having plans on his off day, hence his lack of sociability to participate in outside school activities. Which wasn't a problem since this was, in fact, a school related project he was progressing on.

As Sawamura speeds to the train station the sun automatically begins to dry his saturated hair. He was at least grateful to say that the augmenting temperature was aiding in him looking less of a psychopath. But he was also questioning how the baseball team played in such conditions. Sawamura already felt like he was on edge of having a heat stroke.

It didn't take long to get to the station, much to Sawamura's building up hatred towards the intense heat. He skids under the shade of the shed and impatiently waits for his train to come around. He taps his foot with every growing ounce of irritation, every tap becoming tetchier by the second.

Inevitably, the time on his phone mentally became the most interesting topic to him.

It didn't help that Haruichi and Toujou were notifying him about the coach asking for him and how close he was to the school. The fact that they didn't know how far Sawamura actually lived from the school made the brunette more of a ticking time bomb. He couldn't just run in his train and demand a fast paced ride because he was late on his own accord.

Sawamura scrunches his nose when he receives another text. "So this is what I have to go through on my days off... " He sighs as he jumps onto the train of his destination and seats himself in a seat closest to the door.

As the train pulls off from the station several minutes after arriving, Sawamura leaves a message in Haruichi's inbox informing him of being on the way. He got a quick reply back, but it wasn't a threat of any he was highly concerned with.

The male leans back in his seat, allowing the flow of the bus ride to put him at ease.
By the time Sawamura had gotten to the school it was 8:45 in the morning. The biggest knot in his stomach detangles when sneaking a hesitant peek at the time on his phone. "Just on time, now I won't be hated" he closes his eyes temporarily, out of relief, before opening them again.

As he walks around campus he could definitely feel the different lighter atmosphere of being to school on a Saturday morning. For one, he didn't have that sudden urge to speed walk in the halls to get to class on time, nor did he have tensed shoulders.

It was really peculiar to the brunette, being mostly inactive in school activities, so it was a weird experience to wander the school out of school hours.

The air was lighter, the place looked bigger without swarms of students brimming in the halls, and it had a radiant feel just walking the empty halls. It was like he had walked in an art museum or stumbled across an amazing shop going on a limited edition sell.

Sawamura releases a breath he hadn't known he was containing as the audible instrumental music tunes through the school courtyard. His eyes lighten from the energy on such a day, and he exits the building he was in to get to the courtyard. There, he could see the band in long rows of ten, each eloping a harmonious tune from the instrument they were playing. They were all in sync.

"Ooh" he whispers to himself as he mindlessly stares at the group before him. It was such a beautiful light tune; now, he knew how Haruichi felt when he listened to jazz or classical music.

The rigors of the morning day blows through the tenth graders body. It was like a ball of energy hit him because he found himself to hyped. It was then, he realized he would actually be going to a game in a real stadium for the first time. It was kind of nervewrecking believe it or not.

As the music continues on, Sawamura's eyes involuntarily landed on a pair of familiar figures that were fervently conversing with each other on the bench talking. The amiable pinklet was wearing a blue puffy jacket with golden italics writing out the school's brass band name. He had on black skinny jeans that tugged comfortably at his waist, and some black sneakers. He seemed to be talking to the other tenth grader next to him, given his mouth moving, while he adjusted the lens of the camera and held it up to his eye for a good picture of the band.

Toujou, on the other hand, was dressed in a blue top that was opulently tucked into his black joggers. He had a white athletic undersleeve on and had black shoes on as well. He was leaned back in his seat, with his camera resting in his lap. The two seemed nicely dress for such an occasion.

Sawamura traipse over to the leisure pair, catching their attention almost instantly. It took Haruichi a few since he was taking pictures, but when his camera landed in his lap and took notice of the shade casting his view, his face lights up even more. "Eijun-kun, you made it!" He chims happily.

The two simultaneously scoots over for the brunette to sit down between them. He thanks him and takes his place. "Sorry I am late, I totally forgot about the game" he sighs in relief as he withdraws his camera and brings the strap over his neck.

"I tried reminding you last night before I headed to bed, but you didn't answer" Haruichi enlightens a bit dishearten. But he refrains from frowning because it was a pleasure seeing him now and alive. Sawamura's breath hitches at the foggy memories of last night.

He anxiously scratches at his left temple. "Yeah, I guess I blacked out or something; I must have
been really tired" Sawamura chuckles to lessen the growing tension.

That seemed enough to convince the observant pinklet because he begins to slowly kick his legs up and down while continuously smiling at the massive group of students before them.

Toujou didn't want to ruin the moment either with the many questions boiling in the back of his head. So all he says is, "Well just know we are here for you" and wraps an arm over his shoulder, pulling his friend in a quick embrace before his hold on him loosens.

"Hey there freshmeat" A voice says from behind them, startling the three intrigued males. Haruchi and Toujou both exchanged wary glances when taking a glance at the physique behind the brunette before finalising their stare at Sawamura, who gapes at the baseball player that was leaning on his back for support. He was dressed in his uniform but had a black jacket outlined in red imprint.

The brunette grumbles something that sounded closely to a prayer.

"What do you want, Kazuya?" Sawamura spat bitterly as he pulls himself from the older male and stands to his feet. The other two does the same, but the reaction doesn't surprise the catcher.

Instead, he leans his elbows onto the top fold of the chair and smiles ever so nicely that it sickens the tenth grader just looking at him. "That's not how you treat your senpai, Eijun" Miyuki snickers as readjusted his arms on the bench so that the stinging pain of the wooden texture didn't further anymore. The conniving look makes even Haruichi cringe.

Sawamura clenches his fist. "Don't call me that!" He spat in the lowest tone he could to compose himself. But it didn't seem to be working.

Toujou gives a look at Haruichi that was indescribable to the two glaring pair. The pinklet shrugs unknowingly, not knowing how to break the little contest they were having.

"Oh? And it's fair that you call me by my own?" He hums as he walks over in front of the younger male. The two were glaring intensively at each other.

Sawamura wasn't going to give him any satisfaction. "You're so obscene" he scoffs. Miyuki frowns, and Sawamura knew it wasn't out of pain or remorse. It meant he was going to make some slick mouthed scornful remark that would urge the brunette to strangle him right then and there. He prepares for the worst, clenching his clammy palms as he forces his eyes to compete with the much adept amber ones.

The everlasting silence was too much for the two overseers. "Um, c'mon, Eijun-kun, we are getting ready to board the bus, want to come with TJ and I and take some last minute photos?" Haruichi tugs on his friend's arm in worry, ultimately forcing the two to break contact.

Sawamura swallows thickly as he stares back at his friend. The worry in his eyes distinguished from the many slits of hair he was normally masked behind. Without rebelling (in hopes of improving his 'day off') Sawamura walks away before he could further feel opted to slap the shit out of the guy.

Miyuki just snickers to himself as he ignores the pugnacious glares his little target's friends were sending him. Rolling his eyes playfully, he begins to make his way back to his team to piss off a certain shortstop with a quick-temper.

"Geez, he is such a jerk" Haruichi scoffs as they got to the entrance of the school, where five buses awaited for them. Sawamura exclaims, "See?? I told you! He targets me for no reason, like I am his little play toy or something" The brunette flails his arms around with indignation.
His eyes were burning a fiery gold, and his skin was red with embarrassment but also malice.

Toujou smirks. "Or...?" The orange haired male chuckles as he mindlessly begins to walk in the direction the cheerleaders were in to get on the bus. He spins around to stop in front of the brunette with a cheeky grin that scared both Haruichi and Sawamura.

Sawamura hated the look. He crosses his arms and huffs, "What?" Oblivious to where this was heading. On the contrary, Haruichi seemed to have gotten where this was going quickly and shifts his weight onto his dominant leg to support him while he leaned over at the baseball photographer.

The tenth grader was demented. It was hurting his head as he fished for a reply to what they were wondering, and these stupid faces weren't helping.

Haruichi steps in front of him. "Maybe he just likes you" he answers nonchalantly before taking a few steps back beside Toujou.

When the statement settled in Sawamura felt his face burn. "What the hell kind of accusation is that??" He fumes sheepishly.

Both Toujou and Haruichi harrumphed to each other. "Anyway, I will see you guys at the stadium, text me" Haruichi waves when the band coordinator was calling for them. The same was going for the baseball and cheerleaders. The three departs from each other momentarily after filing their biddings and heads to the bus.

When Sawamura steps up onto the bus he tensed up from the many players that filled the seats. Their bags hung up in the cabinets above them like in an airplane; boisterous chatter from all of the revitalized players anxious to end the game and begin the Fall tournament.

Meticulously, Sawamura meanders through the players reaching over to talk with the neighboring other, or the ones passing time by playing card games. It was quite annoying to an extent since this made finding a seat difficult.

Sawamura smiles at the empty seat he found in the back and settles himself in the seat. He retrieves his phone from his pocket and saw he had a few messages from his friends back in Nagano. A few he went to junior high with. The brunette smiles at the fond memories of his friends and begins to answer the messages one-by-one.

One thing he could conclude from spending the next two minutes contacting his friends: They were excited about him being at Seidou.

However, Wakana was mad that he didn't inform her about the game, otherwise she would had helped out and planned to come. But he reassures her that he could do it on his own--and only anticipates for the conversation to continue once he got home.

He chuckles, yet, doesn't take notice of the two skeptical teens talking about him. It wasn't long till one of them taps Sawamura to make him look up. "Huh?" He asked as his eyes stared into those of the much taller and lanky baseball player with matching orbs. He had a natural impassive look, but an overall chill demeanor. They both greeted each other with a kind smile of their own.

"You're the photographer right?" He asked in a deep, stoic tone. The tenth grader was a bit baffled that a guy, who was obviously at a higher caliber than him, was even asking about him. Usually most upperclassmen wouldn't give a flapjack about the lower tier people under them.

This makes the golden eyed male feel a bit chagrined, but he melts under the pressure when he takes the older teen's hand into his and shakes it. His palm was rough of callous but his hand was
moisturized. Sawamura couldn't even begin to fathom what type of drills they worked when preparing for tournaments.

"Y-Yeah, I am Sawamura Eijun" The younger male introduced. The jet haired teen's lips widen into a bigger smile. He seemed quite nice and easy to get along with.

"I am Yuuki Tetsuya, but everyone refers to me as Tetsu. I am the captain of the team" he does the same as he lets go of the smaller one's hand. The surprise look held onto Sawamura's face spoke a lot of praise for the senior.

People who were as kind, approachable, and easy going as Tetsu weren't often the ones selected to be captain of the team. Either he carries a lot of motivation with him on his shoulders or...

A sudden loud contemptuous scoff shakes the bus that breaks the trance Sawamura kept himself in; startles him. He jerks his head up and held onto the arm rest of the chair he sat on as loud stomps barged into the back of the bus until the silhouette of the male was deciphered.

It was a guy much smaller than Tetsu's height, but still tall nonetheless to the tenth grader. He had messy slick orange hair that was being hidden by the cap he wore, brown irises that were mostly covered with his thick brows, and his lips pursed outwards so his teeth showed. They were grinding with loads of frustration--and it wasn't just the throbbing veins and fisted knuckles that gave it away. This guy seemed to be the total opposite of the captain.

Tetsu calmly glances up at his friend, replying with a blunt "Oh, hey Jun" as he reclines in his seat. The standing male was throwing daggers at him with his eyes.

"Don't hey Jun me! I hope you know I had to clean up your damn Shogi pieces that were scattered all over the floor in the room! You pig!" He snaps with spit flying out of his mouth. To Sawamura, he would have thought the amount of spit wandering out his mouth could be the exact same weight as a whole beaver dam on it's own.

Sawamura glances from the so-called Jun guy back to Tetsu, who seemed skeptical about the modification. He didn't seem to have any recollection of doing such thing, but it was evident he was the only one that played the japanese game.

Testu frowns, "Sorry" he says in a modest tone, and then peeks over at the young photographer like nothing personal had been spilled. He held a hand out and presented, "This is Sawamura Eijun, our photographer from the yearbook committee" Jun finally takes notice of the brunette.

His strained face softens up. Sawamura nervously smiles up at the rollicking but austere teen. Jun doesn't smile; but instead, leniently waves at the brunette.

The quick greeting is short-lived, owing to the fact that Jun spun back to face the slightly lanky male that was still smiling at the teen.

"By the way, mind previewing the opposing teams stats with me?" Jun says as he scoots over in the seat with Tetsu so he was sitting next to the window instead of the edge. As the two drifts off into an informative conversation, Sawamura lounges back in his seat, hardly besotted in anything aside from the camera he was rotating in his grip.

The bus begins to pull away from the school--butterflies instantly filling his stomach. It felt really eccentric to be doing something he generally wouldn't devote himself to on a regular Saturday. But seeing that he was fine getting only about a few hours of sleep, this wasn't as bad. It did give him something to do instead of the montonous schedule he followed every week.
He didn't want anything to ruin the enliven feeling supplementing inside him. The adrenaline trajecting in his veins ached with excitement. His underlying smile skyrockets when the euphoria sets in; his shoulders slugs against the textile of the seat.

He fiddles with the equipment beneath his fingers as he stares out the window of the bus. Where they were going was a place Sawamura has never been to before. Staying in Nagano, the brunette never much had time to stroll around Kokubunji to see what was enveloping campus.

Seeing it now was just captivating to want to look away.

This made him seem like he kept himself contain in his room. "Maybe I should travel more" he hums to himself as he kicks his legs exuberantly as the bus rides by a few agricultural buildings. The aesthetic paintings and mosaic windows made the city seem very enthralling.

With the fall season setting in, the leaves were accustoming to the darken orange and brown leaves that scattered the roads. The blue sky hidden by small thin sheets of clouds blanketing the exposed area makes the setting even more enticing.

This makes Sawamura chuckle to himself when he reminisces a moment earlier in the summer about his friend complaining to him about traveling. He wasn't going to admit he was right in the moment of witnessing the beauty of the city, but he did plan on asking him to go out with him anytime soon once his money was looking right.

"God I hate admitting he was right" Sawamura thinks about his blonde companion that always seemed to be traveling. He never really knew why or when Mei traveled, all he knew was that he always insisted that Sawamura did.

And because he never knew the reason behind it Sawamura firmly stayed on his bed.

But damn. He felt like he was missing out.

The bus finally comes to a stop at the stadium around 10:08 in the morning, giving the team enough time to get settled in their assigned locker room and warm up for the game.

Sawamura ogles at the height of the stadium and felt a bit good that he brought his wallet with him. He was going to buy something from here as a first experience kind of thing.

"Sawamura" The coach's voice startles him to look up when hearing his name and could see the eyes of the team looking back at him when he stands. The brunette gulps. "Y-Yes, sir?" He stammers as he stands out in the isle. The coach was giving him that same stare he did when the first met.

"Make sure you have everything, okay? If you need help finding a bathroom or anything just ask Miyuki." Sawamura stiffens up midsentence but tries to not make any facial expressions when the older male stands to his seat and waves his hand frantically at him. Sawamura rolls his eyes. "He is the chaperone for that. If you can't find Miyuki then ask Kuramochi: number 6" the coach says before beckoning him up to the front of the bus to exit first.

Sawamura grabs his necessary equipage that he would need to take pictures and ends up taking his money and water bottle with him. He exits the bus and patiently waits as the others come out. One guy named Sakai and the other Masuko was carrying two ice coolers while the others came out with their own implements for the sport.

Once everyone was out Sawamura follows the group inside the stadium, where a lot of Seidou fans were greeting them. This made the brunette feel a bit out of place when hearing all the names of the players. "Wow, I didn't know this sport was so popular in Japan" Sawamura distinctly whispers to
himself.

One of the players that made out what he said walks the same pace as him and gives a really sweet smile. "Yeah it is. The sport is the best in Japan with sumo wrestling following behind" he tells with a genuine chuckle.

Sawamura is astonished but guilty at the same time. He never played the sport or took any interest in it.

"In fact, our school is only the third best in the nation behind Inashiro being first and Ichidai being second" He continues on. This was definitely news.

The other brunette see's how absorbed the yearbook student was and grins. He turns back around and proceeds with the rest of the group, falling in step with a guy that was titled number 9. The guy he was talking to was 10.

Sawamura ponders to himself when they reach the locker room and files in after the other. This wasn't half bad at all.

"Alright guys, we have about a half hour till the game starts. If anyone needs to use the bathroom do it quick. Others go practice. Pitchers in the bullpen and fielders down the first baseman line" Jun orders through the ruckus of the team setting their bags down in the locker room. Some of them retrieved their gloves and cletes from their personal duffel bags and leaves through the door to the dugout. Meanwhile, a few members were sprinting to the bathroom.

That leaves the locker room fairly empty. The only sound was the rustling of the catchers garment being tied by its natural owner. Seeing the oversized pallets, Sawamura grudgingly decides to offer help to pass time.

"Need help?" Sawamura holds back the bitterness in his tone as he bends down to aid in attaching the armor around his legs. Miyuki gives a cheeky grin. "Since you insist" Miyuki recommences preparing himself.

Sawamura rolls his eyes. "So what are you suppose to be? Some sort of defender or something?" The tenth grader breaks the silence between them and peeks up at Miyuki, who had been removing his glasses from his eyes. Sawamura quickly averts his eyes to link the other shinguard. The click of his glasses folding echoes and is placed in his container. "You'll see" he answers a few seconds after.

Sawamura levels himself up to his height and stares at Miyuki who was now wearing protective eyewear for the game. He seemed the same as always, except his eyes appeared brighter. The tenth grader felt his cheeks heat up.

"Y-Yeah" Sawamura shifts the weight of his right leg onto his left. He then busies himself by looking around and ask, "Is that all you need help with?" He asked while clasping his hands in front of him.

Miyuki looks down at him. "No. But if you want to fill your schedule with my commands I will happily give you a list of things to do" He winks and Sawamura gags.

"Ugh, I can't believe I swallowed that!" The tenth grader scrunches his face up at the acidic taste scorching the back of his throat. He opens the cap to his bottle and gulps down at least three mouthfuls.

The two both turns to the sound of footsteps invading the room seeing Kuramochi pop down from the dugout with his cap on. He seemed to be looking for someone (or someone) but yeilds when he
spotted Miyuki and sneers. "What the hell are you still doing in here? You need to get warmed up" the shortstop barks at the catcher.

"I am pretty sure I know what to do by now" Miyuki derides as he shuffles pass Sawamura. "If you did, you wouldn't have Ryou-san urging me to get you unless you want us both to run laps when we get back" the shorter male spat while hitting his back quite hard. The bespectacled male seemed immune to the pain.

"I'm not running no damn..." his voice fades when the two flees the locker room with the returning players. Sheepishly, Sawamura walks out into the dugout as well, seeing the assistant and the coach both observing the players of both the enemy and their own team that was sharing the field for practice.

The coolers were placed inside the dugout beside the resting pin. The only one currently sitting inside the dugout was one of the managers that would be documenting every attribute of today's game.

Not wanting to sit down, Sawamura rest his arms along the leather frame of the fence and spectates both teams on the field for the time being since he didn't plan on taking pictures until the game started. When watching, the brunette could clearly distinguish the line of differences between each team.

As the referee blows their whistle signaling the start of the game, the crowd erupts into exciting applause as both teams approach the center of the diamond. Sawamura holds onto his camera to anticipate whatever moment he assumed would be good.

Both teams bid their wishes and departs back to the dugout. Seidou was the first heading into the field.

The energy in the enclosed compartment was nothing but full of energy. Everyone seemed to be hyped for the game despite the heat.

"Eijun" Sawamura jerks his glare over at Miyuki, who had called him.

He says through gritted teeth, "What do you want?" while tightening his hand on the handle of the fence. Miyuki notices and grew amused.

"Remember, get my good side, which is every side, so keep the camera on me okay?" He bats his eyes politely. Even nearby teammates gagged at the unusual lightness of his tone. The catcher was in no shape or form nice. Everyone also mentally agreed that the word "nice" wasn't even apart of his vocab.

"Don't get me yelling" Jun states coming beside the brunette.

"Aw, but it brings out your natural beauty" Miyuki contemptuously spoke. Tetsu refrains Jun from plummeting the year younger player by holding him back by the collar of his uniform.

Sawamura laughs at the scene, "Don't worry! My camera will be up the whole time. I don't intend on missing any good shots" He promises the group. They all smile at him before rushing out to the field when the final whistle was blown. The band starts to play from above and Sawamura, along with Takako, watches as the game starts.

Sawamura was exhilarated just watching the game.

This was definitely worth his Saturday. Or at least that's what he thought.
For the top of the first inning, Sawamura manage to get a few good pictures from the fielders. The defense was so solidified that any ball coming in any of the players way didn't go remiss. Sawamura was positive it was because they didn't want a spotted error to take in accord of earning them some sort of punishment when they got back. But he knew it was because these guys were actually putting in the work and effort. For the pictures, which he was showing Takako when the next batter was coming up, was one of the pitcher (who he learned to know was Kawakami) throwing a pitch with his arm swinging out, one of Masuko stopping a ball with his body, and one of Jun throwing to second. He was able to zoom in in a nick of time. But so far, he only got three pictures and they weren't bad from what the senior manager was saying. "They are all set at good angles" she comments with astonishment after checking out Kawakami's picture again.

Sawamura gushes, but accepts the compliment. "Thanks" he says as he withdraws his camera back from her. The inning had successfully ended with the score the same as when they left, which meant so far the game was running smoothly.

People who weren't batting yet watched with interest as Sawamura sets himself on the leather of the fence to sit and places his camera at a reasonable distance when Kuramochi went up to bat. He had been waiting for the pitcher to ready himself.

Sawamura concentrates on Kuramochi's stance, and zooms in so that from his waistband up was visible in the screen. He adjusts the width and height of the camera and after configuring a few buttons here and there, the brunette steals a picture of the shortstop swinging his bat and making full contact. Best part was that he got the action included, which spices up the picture.

The tenth grader doesn't pull away his camera though. He snaps a few of Kuramochi running towards first, then of him attempting to steal second when the pitcher gives the second baseman a ball. The steal was successful. "Wow, he's fast" Sawamura inarticulately mutters. But, like always, someone hears and butts in.

"Him stealing a base is practically two for us. No one can stop him" Tetsu says as he applies a helmet onto his head. Sawamura only nods because he has no reply or any concept of the sport.

The game continues, and by now Seidou had already scored two points when Tetsu hits a two-run RBI. That left him on second and only one out--Jun popped a flyball in the air. The frustration was transparent; he demanded Sawamura deleted whatever photos he had of him getting out. He does so, but only the ones he thought weren't good anyway.

As he takes the opportunity to delete some photos, the crowd goes into another uproar, which baffles Sawamura and makes him look up.

The last time such cheers happened it was because Tetsu was some sort of well-known baseball star in all of Japan. Apparently, according to Takako's facts, he was one of the most consistent and best batters in Japan. Now what was it that had them on their feet?

His eyes widen when he heard the crowd chanting the one name he least expected but saw coming. Miyuki! Miyuki!

"What?! No way these people are actually cheering for him!" Sawamura's face became white, his ears rings from the loudness of the crowd making his head spin. He furrowed his brows. "Everyone seems to like him no matter where I go." Sawamura holds his camera up to his face to get a good clearance of the male.

Everyone was chanting his name as if he was some sort of famous singer. And he's the last person he wanted to hear being broadcasted on Esports about being the notorious Seidou catcher with keen
Sawamura watches as Miyuki hovers the bat over his shoulder, legs bent and eyes fixated on the pitcher anticipating what he'll throw to him and calculating what he gave the previous four batters in comparison to each other.

The ball slips from the pitcher's hand. Miyuki pulls the bat over his shoulders successfully predicting the next pitch.

Sawamura clicks his camera.

The ball launches all the way over the fence, emitting a loud cry from the crowd. The brunette snatches his head back and watches in disbelief as the ball falls in place on the ground. His jaw drops.

"H-He hit that far" Sawamura incoherently mumbles to himself with a hand draping over his mouth.

The players that were on base retire to home plate freely. They all make their way over, and when Miyuki heads back into the dugout everyone is pulling him in a tight embrace.

The brunette drops his hand from over his mouth and stares at the megane with wide eyes. He closes his mouth, and stares back at the field where the pitcher of Shuuhoku high school seemed morally oppressed. It sucked for him that it had to happen during the first inning.

He felt kind of bad for the pitchers in future schools that would be facing a catcher with a damn good keen eye. It was like he has his foot buried in their backs and was the king of the diamond. In a way, Sawamura could relate to him. Maybe they both felt it, or it was just him; or everyone on the opposing team. But maybe: Miyuki had them all wrapped around his fingers whether they liked it or not. And regardless if they were close or not, everyone hated Miyuki in a way.

Sawamura Shakily holds his camera up so that he was focusing on number nine that was simultaneously batting while the crowd was still cheering.

He couldn't concentrate quite easily with everyone chanting Miyuki's name or talking about him every second like he was some controversial topic. It was annoying to the ear and Sawamura was already losing focus.

But it's not like he could do anything about it.

Through the madness of the havoc boisterous cheering and shouting, Sawamura hears Miyuki exclaim, "I hope you got that beauty in the shot, Eijun! You are here for a reason you know", it makes the brunette's eye twitched with indignation.

He doesn't argue with it though. He doesn't shout at him to stop calling him by his first name, nor does he rebut against the comment about him practically having no life outside of yearbook.

The vein on his forehead that almost burst ends up decreasing his mild headache. He forces the images in the back of his mind, and musters the most convincing smile he could so that his mood and quietness didn't ruin it for everyone. It was a technique he had been practicing for almost two years now that he mastered effectively.

He just laughs the pain off.

Like he has been doing for most of his life.
And it hurt. Like. Hell.

"Nothing can ever go my way"
Everyone's Suffering Seems To Bring Him Joy

Chapter Summary

Sawamura notices a whole domino effect with Miyuki as the constant variable: more suffering for him and others. And somehow, Sawamura feels guilty for everyone dealing with him.

Chapter Notes

oh geez, dear god for the mounts of errors ;/

I previewed like 3 times so there shouldn't be much but I still manage to make minor errors, which I apologize for.

Anyway enjoy the chapt!

"The school seems to be revitalize when the baseball team wins" Haruichi points out the next morning when the freshman trio was hanging out by Sawamura's locker. The three takes notice of the light and cheery students passing by, each mentioning the events that took place two days ago. A certain brunette furrows his brows.

"How are they still big news after two days?" Sawamura didn't seem to understand the big deal about the sport. All it was to him was a group of guys competing to see who got the most dirt stuck in their clothes.

Haruichi smiles endearingly at his friend. "Seidou is a big team, kinda serious for them to get their mojo back" a cute exotic chortle leaves the pinklet's lips as he turns to the taller male next to him when he begins to answer. "Not to mention they haven't won the championship in over six years" he states ever so bluntly, and nonchalantly gazes down at the two, one of them he offended.

The pinklet softly nods, "I'm sure what this school needs is winning the upcoming tournament. After all, everyone seems to have a lot more faith in this years' team" Haruichi says, pressing himself higher for a mere second by standing on his toes.

Sawamura gave his friend a crazy look. "Any team that has Miyuki has to be just as low as his IQ" the brunette snorts as he slams his locker shut. He was still ticked off that he couldn't get his spread to change. And what made him even more mad was that everyone seem to be having fun with their spreads excluding him.

He huffs, and crosses his arms as he starts to his homeroom class, the two others gladly tagging along to walk him since the time was right. "Like I said, Eijun-kun, I don't blame you for disliking him" Haruichi pauses and bumps into him playfully so that their arms brushed against each other. He smirks up at him when grabbing the brunette's attention.

"But eventually you'll have to get over it one way or another" he finishes. Furuya agrees with a slight
nod of his head. "D-Don't encourage Harucchi, stone face! Plus, what do you guys know? You don't have a clue what he did to me to make me grow so hostile towards him!" Sawamura fumes, his face scrunching unpleasantly.

The passing students that took notice of his face either started gossiping or quickly glanced away as if they were never looking. "Hostile?" Haruichi questions with a raised brow. He looks up at Furuya with an eerie look.

"A word like that sounds weird coming from someone whose never heard of baseball" the taller male shakes his head with agreement, making Sawamura gasp. "You are both the worse!" He snaps.

Haruichi jerks his head at him. "Oh really?" He raises a thin brow at the brunette. "I thought you hated Miyuki-senpai?" Furuya recollects when they turn the corridor.

Steam started pouring out of Sawamura's ears at the mention of his name. "But that's different! Miyuki is literally a reincarnation of satan! He probably eats souls for meals and brushes his teeth with the bones of his victims!" The ranting continues on, but at this point the two weren't listening and began engaging in their own conversation. What was sad was Sawamura not taking notice until loud cries snapped the three out of their colloquy.

Every movement ceased from there. It didn't seem to take long to detect the source of that cry. And it wasn't of anything frightening either.

Apparently, from what the three could hear, some of the infamous baseball players had come to pay a visit to the freshman floor, to whatever reason remained unknown. The three watched as the small group of the seniors strolled towards them. The supportive chants and idolize screaming distinctive to those even around the corner to come check out what was happening.

A wave of comfort unfolded in Sawamura's chest when he didn't see Miyuki with them. The last thing he wanted to hear was him boasting about hitting two consecutive homeruns. Because who gives a shit about that aside from him?

"You guys really stand out as freshman" Ryousuke contemptuously smirks when the seniors appraoaches them. The three all jumped at the remark but felt slightly embarrassed that they had to be pointed out like that.

"Really, Aniki?" Haruichi grumbles with tainted pink cheeks as he looks down to avoid any further criticism. The oldest places his hand on his hip. "What? All we did was come to greet our little photographer" the corner of his eyes curled up with hidden sinister.

That was something Sawamura didn't expect. "Y-You came to see me?" He stammers nervously as he clutches at his folded hands with uncertainty. The insecurity slowly setting in.

The relaxed looking orange haired center fielder slugs an arm around his kouhai's neck. "Of course! We came to see if those damn pictures came out great!" Jun boisterously exclaims with anxiety. "I've been trying to look my best knowing I was being watched! How'd it turn out?" He laughs causing a lot of people to look their way if they wasn't already.

The first year really felt uneasy with all the eyes looking (or glaring) at him.

Tetsu places a hand on his friend's shoulder and gently pulls him back. "Calm down, Jun, he is probably busy. We can't just demand him these things you know" he says in his stern tone.

"You're starting to sound like coach" Ryou snorts with a cheeky grin. This depreciates the stoic male a bit but he finds a way to not lose his composure, mostly because he didn't want the freshman to see
the aura spark out of him. "Gonna get mad? Where's your aura, Yuuki?" Ryou pokes the tallest in his side, getting no reaction as expected.

Sawamura loosens himself, shifting the dead weight feeling in his right leg to the other. "Never mind that, but shouldn't we just ask him later when he is likely available?" Tetsu argues. The brunette gazes between the small group.

Jun lets out a loud, clamorous groan. "We're already here!" He shouts and shoots his friend an argumentative glare. The captain rolls his eyes at his stubborn behavior and turns back to Sawamura, who was blankly looking between the two. "I-I don't mind showing you guys the pictures when your next practice comes" he scratches at the back of his neck timidly.

The three faces before him instantly lights up. "Really?" They asked in unison, Sawamura shaking his head with content. He was actually happy to be showing them their pictures since he had already shown Takako, one of the managers, and they were pretty good. Sawamura was quite pleased with them himself.

"Y-Yeah, after school" Sawamura gives them a crooked smile. "Oh great" The older Kominato sighs, getting the attention of the surrounding members. "I thought I was going to have to tell Youichi to steal the camera. Looks like I have a few arrangements to make" he turns on his heels and begins to make his way while ignoring the frantic Haruichi.

The other two seniors bids their farewells also. "See you at practice Sawamura" Tetsu pats his back. "Mhm, and if you need anything we are here to support you!" Jun shot.

The captain gives a good example by rolling up one of the sleeves of his polo shirt, and puts his muscles on display. That had the girls secretly squealing.

Sawamura chuckles at their overprotective side even though they only met a few days ago. I guess it was a way to know that he had good relations with the captain and vice. After saying bye to the other two the seniors hurried and fleed the freshman floor before returning to their own when the bell goes off.

Haruichi nudges at his friend. "Now you have nothing to worry about, so if Miyuki really is bothering you just tell them okay? They'll help you" the pinklet turns to Furuya this time. "Let's head to class" he says, and the two waves goodbye to the lone brunette then skips away to their classrooms before they were late.

The brunette lets out a sigh while he enters his classroom, spotting sight of his chair that was primarily being taken over by the guy aside from Miyuki who makes his life a constant hell at Seidou.

He mentally groans to himself as he inches closer to the much bolder and pugnacious freshman that was purposely sitting in his seat with his little clique around.

It doesn't take long for them to recognise Sawamura; they smile when they do. The eyes staring expectantly at the freshman makes his body crawl with heat.

Every part of his body suddenly felt itchy and his cheeks sizzled as he tried to find something 'kind' to say to remove them.

But they beat him to that. "Look how quick his face turns red when he see's us" one of the guys snorts as he glares with intimidation at the brunette. He steps back cautiously.

"C-Can you guys please just move out of my-"
"Ca-Can you guys jus- please. Don't try to make that stupid sympathetic face to guilt us, and use the light voice to think we'll move" The blonde says with a conniving grin on his face.

Sawamura's blood ran cold when they laugh. "I j-just want you guys to move or-

"Or what?" They pester him with awaiting faces.

The brunette tightens his grip on the straps of his bag and averts his gaze so he is looking anywhere but at the four impatient eyes. After a moment of silence, the jet haired male speaks up, straightening himself in Sawamura's seat. "I think I like this spot though, why don't you go to the back" He gestures behind them.

Sawamura looks where his thumb points at for a brief second before furrowing his brows. He really wanted his seat. "Bu-

The late bell cuts him off and the sound of the door clicking shut when the rest of the students rushed in goes off. The latter's heart rested in his stomach. He didn't like the back of the classroom.

The group of guys sniggers at the vulnerable teen's look as he simply obeys and walks through the isle to get to the only seat left. He stumbles on his way, almost being tripped for their amusement. "What's funny?" The teacher snarls by the time Sawamura was sitting down.

He ferrets for his first period belongings, slapping his notebook and pencil on the desk in front of him for the class instructions.

Ongoing snickers from the little frat group continues, much to Sawamura and the teachers liking. "You guys better not cause a disturbance" he rolls his eyes as he taps the bottom of his pen on his clipboard. His eyes soon falling on the main first year.

"Ah, Eijun, decided to switch seats today?" The teacher queries in monotone as he glances back down at his clipboard.

Sawamura slugs on his palm. "I guess" he answers dryly, his eyes involuntarily falling on the guy that finds his suffering for entertainment.

He was staring back at him, a hint of some unknown trait loitering in his dark eyes. When they make eye contact shivers run down his spine, and he breaks it by finding interest in the blank page he opened to.

Class drags on for as long as it's always been, possibly even longer the more a minute felt like an hour to Sawamura when he kept on peeking at the clock. Just when he thought the class wouldn't be over, the bell rings and Sawamura jumps out of his seat, escaping the lecture his teacher was about to give the class about college readiness. The day continues to carry on like a drag. Meandering through the halls seems to become problematic every time Sawamura find himself not getting out in the halls fast enough; and sitting through class while waiting for the day to end isn't any better. He skips lunch with the same group of friends he always hangs around and tries to ignore the acrimonious stinging pain at his chest.

He continues to talk and argue the same way, hoping he could get through one day being subtle. At first he thought it was working. But when the bell for last period rung Haruichi and Furuya comes following behind their friend when he heads to his locker again that day.

"I'm going to go use the bathroom" Furuya states when the three briefly engaged themselves in a short conversation about the events of the day.
The two nods and watches as Furuya turns to leave. "If you get lost I'll send mama Hucchi to come look for you!" Sawamura shouts with a pleased look on his face. Haruichi sweatdrops at the new nickname he quickly grew to hate.

Furuya's face twist with certainty, like he was up for it. He skips out of sight.

"You two seem to...have a close relationship" the young Kominato grins as he pokes at his exfoliated cheek. Sawamura eyes his smaller friend "You think?" He closes his locker after he grabs his camera and they begin to make their way to the baseball field.

"If anything I think you are way more closer to Furuya than I am. We are fated rivals!" He tenaciously grips his hand.

Haruichi smiles at this, always seeming to enjoy the exuberant side of his high school friend. The pinklet clears his throat. He didn't want to put Sawamura on the spot right away, so he employed them both in a new conversation. "How is taking pictures for the infamous Seidou team?" He nudges at his friend again with many inquiries.

He really wondered how it was to watch his brother play along side with other teenage experts. Did he have a favorite team member? Or activity to do with them?

"Ah, it's good. When they are done with practice I plan to show them their pictures" he answers with a tender smile wrenching at his lips.

The feminine looking male raises a thin brow. "Really? Without editing?" Sawamura shakes his head at this as they round the corner to exit the building. "Yeah, I've decided to edit when I have a clear idea of how I want their spread to look" he faintly chuckles as he readjust the camera settings.

It didn't sound like a bad idea, but picking which pictures he would choose out of all would take time.

"Are you and it getting along?" Haruichi slides in once they were nearing the baseball field.

The players that were overexerting theirselves to get on the first string could be heard boisterously applauding themselves and strictly supporting one another.

It amazed the two how many people are working behind those of the first string members to steal their positions.

Sawamura even grew curious to see how Miyuki dealt with his opponets. With an attitude as self-absorbed as his, anyone wanting to fill that catcher positon on the roster could be easily assumed that he is the far more worst person to compete againt.

"He's bold. Observant. Skilled. And strategic" the brunette chews at his bottom lip when he caught sight of the brunette catcher roughly jumping up from his position to catch a ball that flew only twelve inches off the ground. The way his body curls when he dives for the ball and lands flat on his stomach makes Sawamura wince uncomfortably.

Honestly, he would hate to be one of the people to go against him. His stats are too high to compare.

"Not in the slightest" Sawamura answers when they reach the first stringers gate.

Haruichi's smile withers a bit. "Well, if anything is going on you know to call me" he lays an assuring hand on his friend's back. This makes Sawamura weakly smile at him.
"Got to get back now to Furuya. Don't get hit again" the pinklet jokes and skips off while adding, "oh, and make sure you tell Aniki I said hi" before jogging off to go meet with the brass band members.

The brunette's smile curls downward when his friend is out of hindsight, and he traunts forward to the field and sits himself at one of the bleachers where a few residents stood nearby in business outfits. Scouters. Athletic reporters. Name it.

Sawamura bends down near the open door of the gate, a great spot where he could get a good side view of the players.

When finishing up the settings of his camera he directs the lens of the device so that he can see the field, and the first person he spots is the third baseman bending down in a protective stance in apprehension if the ball came his way. Feeling like the sighting was a bit off, Sawamura begins tinkering with the settings again, till it fits his common criteria.

As he does this, the latter doesn't take into account the group of five men hovering over him. When he does, Sawamura jumps. "Um?" He hums as he stands to his feet so he was eye level with at least one of them. The guy his height seemed a bit pained and timid while the other buffer guys were much more pugnacious looking.

"Are you suppose to be the yearbook photographer for baseball?" The more nicer looking guy ask with a genuine but depressing expression.

Sawamura slowly nods his head, the group simultaneously exchanging looks when hearing his response. This confuses the brunette. "Um, can I he-"

"Actually, yes you can help us" the taller of the group interjects. The voice in Sawamura's throat ceases from the sudden harsh tone. He sounded like he had a lot to say.

"O-Oh? Well what is it?" Sawamura asked pridefully, ignoring the glint of malice from the other. He never really had a lot of people come to him asking for help so whatever it was must be important. And from their attire he knew they were, in fact, members of Seidou's baseball team.

Could they want him to rely a message in their place because of their cluttered schedules?

"It's more of an advice thing. Like we help you" One of the guys from behind says. Sawamura raises a curious brow. "What do yo-"

"We aren't trying to tell you how to do your job or anything" the guy in front of him cuts him off again. He stands tall with his bulky muscles draped over his face. The sun kisses at his tan skin and his face is drenched with sweat from the practice.

He looked as if he could break Sawamura in half if he wanted to. And that's not what the brunette hoped the outcome would be. Then how would he get home?

"We are all apart of the baseball team you know" the more amiable one speaks up again, his golden locks similiar to Haruichi's, only shorter, slides down the sides of his face.

"O-Of course I know" Sawamura stammers as he tugs at the end of his sleeve. He had no clue where this conversation was heading.

The guy in front speaks again. "So why is it that you only take pictures of the first stringers?" He says malvolantly. Now, Sawamura knew what was up.
He tries to find some excuse to rebuttle with, but none came to mind. If he had to go with ratings the school would love to see pictures of only the first stringers. He had forgotten how those on the second string or third felt. Being benched was already hard enough.

Guilt rushes in Sawamura's veins. Heat punctures into his cheeks and over his face that the heat radiating from the sun felt twice as stronger than before.

"I-I'm sorry, I am only a first year and don't really know what to expect. I just take pictures of the moments that happen...sorry, I don't have a schedule of your games..." He frowns and lowers the height of his camera.

Two still didn't seem convinced. "So you don't bother asking? Or is the first string just too perfect that having them is all you need" Sawamura's heart clenched when he hears this.

He was still an inexperienced photographer and here he was already getting reprimanded near the beginning of the tournament. Sawamura has never felt this bad before. Whether they were trying to actually give him advice or not that stung like hell to him. "I-I didn't-"

"You know some of us go home wondering already what we need to do to catch up to our enemies. Don't try to make us feel even more inferior by giving them all the attention and put them in a whole page aside from us. We already think we are worthless, try to have some dignity and have sympathy for us. I'm a damn senior and I haven't been on the first string at all. By the end of the year my mom expects me to come home with a yearbook of memories, and how can I do that when I can't invite her to my games because I have nothing to show it of" he snaps with built-up animosity.

The kind looking guys frowns as well, averting his gaze to avoid meeting Sawamura's hurt ones. "I'm a senior and I haven't even played in any of the second or third stringers games...I love baseball and dedicate my skills to the sport" he pauses, and his sober looking eyes meets with Sawamura's golden ones.

"I really do feel like I waste my time at this over-confidential school" he throws his arms over his head and turns to face his friends.

"You guys wanna go? Let's not trick him into guilt tripping" the two agrees but spares Sawamura a last glance before jogging off when they were called back by other memebers of the neglected strings.

Pain struck Sawamura; he didn't know how to respond, nor what to say. What could he say to them? He didn't know. He's never wasted years of his life not doing something he loved.

But still though....

Did they have so much built-up belligerence in them that they had to lash out at the baseball photographer? The brunette timidly reclips the camera around his neck while biting back on his lip.

He honestly had nothing to retaliate with.

When the weight on Sawamura's shoulders increased tenfold, he jumps from surprise but also from the dramatic increase that he could barely carry alone.

His eyes dart up to meet the egocentric catcher that had been slugging on him for support. His limpid amber eyes burning with content as he stares down at his shorter friend. "There's my favorite person in the world!" He smirks as he tugs the brunette deeper into his chest.
Sawamura's face reddened. "Funny you think that, because you are not my favorite person" he pulls himself from the bespectacled teen's grip and takes a few steps back.

Miyuki seemed opposed to that objection but doesn't press it any further than that. Instead, he plants a hand onto his hip when he turns to look in the direction the group of second stringers dispersed off into.

"What did they want?" He asked with a hint of disinterest.

He turns back to look at Sawamura who just stood there staring at the amble group of players that had dreamt of being on the first string.

"Nothing" he turns on his heel and marches in place with Miyuki, who catches up to him, as they sauntered over to the field.

"Clearly it's something" Miyuki confirms when they enter the vacant dugout filled with bats and carts of balls. "Since when did everything become your business?" Sawamura spat as he laid his bag down in an empty corner and opened the water bottle he had packed.

Miyuki watches his turned figure, taking in his view with an eerie look on her face. He sneers while crossing his arms over his garment.

"You shouldn't talk to your senpai in such a rude way, ya'know" he grins sadistically as he inches closer to Sawamura. The smaller brunette almost bumps into the covered player when he puts his water down then spins around to face the skeptical teen; backing up so that he is centimeters away from the wall.

Miyuki was too close. Close to when Sawamura could feel his breath hitting at his skin. Their eyes intensively staring at each other.

"M-Miyuki...what are you doing?" The latter backs up when Miyuki leans forward.

"You know it's bad to talk to your senpai, Ei, have some respect" Miyuki tugs lightly at Sawamura's cheek. His touch leaving a warm sensation as his fingers leave his skin.

Sawamura stares openly at the brunette. "D-Don't touch me" He blushes as he waves his hand around. He felt embarrassed that he was able to lose his cool around him, it was such a superior aura he just drags with him.

"I can do whatever I want...I can defend myself" he pulls back and crosses his arms so that he is looking out into the field.

Silence vents between them, too long for Sawamura's comfort. He occupies his mind by watching Jun and Ryousuke execute a play swiftly. The wind blows, thrusting through his hair, collecting the mounts of dust that came from the field.

Sawamura brushes his fingers along the skin of his arm to distract himself. He could feel Miyuki staring at him and it was starting to get uncomfortable. But why he wasn't talking creeped him out even more.

It didn't make the situation even more lighter knowing that they were alone.

His eyes flickers up at Miyuki's physique for a quick moment. He caught sight of the taller brunette blankly staring at him like he was in a daze.
His eyes appeared darker and his lips tightened. "You can defend yourself?" Miyuki was in disbelief. The amount of incredulity listed on his face was about as visible as his enormous ego.

Sawamura blinks for a moment, shivering from the coldness of the wind but plays it off by massaging at his arms.

"Do you not think I can?" Sawamura stammers as he drops his arms down. The sound of the balls coming to contact with the bat and the aggressive shouting comes to earshot.

A cheeky grin comes across his face. "You're brittle" he sniggers and steps closer so that Sawamura had no arm space to push. The smaller brunette face' scrunches with discomfort, he holds his hands up to back off the taller male. "B-Brittle!" Sawamura exclaims with a pursed lip.

Miyuki eyes the photographer. Small body, long arms, a kiddy face and an ebullient attitude? "You can easily pass as a stick" he shot.

Sawamura gasped and punches him in the shoulder before storming out past him. Miyuki quickly scurs in front of him. "That really hurt, Ei. You don't want me to tell your yearbook teacher" he smirks.

The brunette's face lightened. "In hopes of changing my spread so I don't have to deal with you!?" He clasped his hands hopefully as he beams up at the catcher.

He watches as Miyuki's face compress together. "Hell no" he says, and begins to unwrap the catcher's equipment from himself.

He almost chokes back on oxygen when he notices the quick altercation in Sawamura's face. "Then get out of the damn way" the latter derives and pushes him aside.

Miyuki's mouth dropped in a sense of mockery. He finishes with the final lace of the knee cap protector and tosses it in the small pile of the other items before grabbing a bat and exiting the dugout to follow his little play friend. "You know you hit exactly like a stick right?" Miyuki says from behind Sawamura, who was walking around the field to find a good position to take pictures.

The raging sounds of his feet crunching on the hard surface of the ground intensifies.

This amuses Miyuki.

"And you know you act like dirt, right?" Miyuki cackles at his response before a ball that was hit came sprinting in front of Sawamura. He jumps and stumbles back, hitting the hardness of Miyuki's chest, who softly grunts at the action and firmly held his hand on his shoulders so he stayed still.

A loud boisterous chortle enters the two's ears. "Gyaha!" Kuramochi screams as he runs over to the fence the ball sat by and collected the item.

"Tetsu almost took you two out!" He hysterically laughs as he faces the bewildered photographer that was gripping onto his camera in fear. The two turns around to see the stoic clean-up hitter giving them a stern but apologetic look.

Sawamura directs his eyes over to the shortstop. "I-Is there a safe place I can stand while I take pictures?" He asked with trepidation.

"Without getting shot at" he sheepishly adds while taking another look at Tetsu.

The smile on his face doesn't fade. "Yeah, you can stand outside from over the fence on the away
team's bleachers" Kuramochi points to the empty bleachers that resided adjacent to the concession stand.

Sawamura thanks him before pulling away from Miyuki, who shoots him a dirty grin. "You know, if anything else scares you my arms are always the safest place to be" he winks at the brunette who narrows his eyes at him.

Sawamura gives him a dirty look in which Miyuki returns with a sly grin. "Don't you have important things to do, like, I don't know just naming things out of the top of my head... practice?" The photographer debriefs as he makes his way to exit the field.

Miyuki stares up at the sky to ponder about it; tapping his chin with a musing face as if the topic was something to actually question.

"Nah!" The broad smile on his face stretches across his lips.

Sawamura opened his mouth to speak but stopped. The aching fiery feeling burning at his chest prevents him from speaking up. He stares at the closed eyed grinning male and grimaced.

"How can he be so self-centered?" Sawamura thought as his eyes bore onto those thin sinister lips. Knots twisted into his stomach.

"Does he think too high of himself that he doesn't feel like he has to practice?..." The slits of his eyes slowly open, and Miyuki spares Sawamura an arrogant smirk before winking. It was the shitiest look he could ever muster.

When the players call Miyuki back over to practice, Miyuki turns on his heel and jogs over so that he could bat next.

As he watches him shift a helmet onto his head an unprecedented feeling makes itself known in Sawamura's stomach. He leaves the field and promendaes to the bleachers Kuramochi had pointed out to him earlier.

It bugged Sawamura, but he couldn't stand how Miyuki could walk around all high and mighty without another care in the world. It seemed like no one's misery was enough to get him to back down, and he knows from experience.

His haughty attitude makes him think about the group of guys who haven't even played since they were first years. To him, they seem to want to give anything to play for even an inning.

And here Miyuki was, rubbing it in everyone's face, whether they played or not.

Sawamura sets himself up on the bleachers and begins to take a few pictures he felt were needed. He got a few. Not a lot. But enough.

When the team transitioned into another practice remedy Sawamura took the chance to overlook the pictures he took. Some were good because the setting was just perfect, but others didn't seem to match the aggression the Fall tournament held.

As he goes through them, having second thoughts, memories of his history with Miyuki disturbingly pops up like a damn bug.

The tragic memories were scorching in the back of his mind. His chest clenches with unnatural force.

Sawamura drops his head into his palms with frustration.
It angered him that Miyuki thought this way of himself without having any regards for others.

"All those people who actually work hard for a position on the field" Sawamura pulls his hair back as he looks up, his bangs slowly toppling over when the wind blows by. He watches as the pitcher known as Tanba pitches to Miyuki.

He hits a few grounders that the fielders were easily able to formulate a play to, and a few high ones that were able to go to outfield. Needless to say, he had everyone working.

Students who had planned to a stay for a specific club ended up dropping by to pay the infamous team a visit. It was repugnant to watch, well for Sawamura.

A group of girls who were seemingly from the cheer group paid a visit and when Miyuki had the chance they made time to talk with him. If twisting a flirtatious lock of hair and batting lashes wasn't flirting than Sawamura didn't know what was. Miyuki seem to be buying into it though. However, they were trying too hard to get his attention.

"You seem down" Sawamura looks up to see a tall handsome looking guy with light brown eyes and brown hair slicked back standing beside him in a Seidou uniform. He gives the photographer a soft benevolent smile in which he responds with a soft one.

"Down?" Sawamura repeats in monotone. The wind sweeps by in a brisky manner.

The taller brunette nods his head. "Are you this years' baseball photographer for the yearbook?" He asked as he leans against the steel gate that divided the field from the bleachers.

Sawamura nods as well. "Y-Yeah" he gushes as he averts his eyes down at the camera. "How's that going?" He asked in a serene tone.

The photographer makes an unsettled face. "It's okay... Not kinda my thing but it's alright"

The taller guy stares down at him with a nonchalant glare. "I'm sure you'll get use to it, I am Takigawa Chris Yuu by the way" he holds his hand up to greet the latter.

Sawamura bites back on his lip. He didn't exactly know how to feel about this since most of the people he met this far (excluding his friends) were either total asses, asses in general, or full of ass. He didn't know the difference but he knew Miyuki could be categorized in each section.

It was unusual that people older than him were being this kind out of their heart.

"Sawamura Eijun" he takes his smaller hand into Chris' hard callous ones. "So are you on the baseball team?" Sawamura asked with wonder as he watches the senior take a seat beside him.

He places his bag down beside him. "I use to" he starts and pauses when he catches sight of the first stringers playing around on the pitchers mound. "Use to?" Sawamura asked with perplexity as he begins to kick his feet.

"Y-Yeah" Chris scratches at the back of his neck. "Things got complicated, I use to be the team's catcher; until Miyuki took my place" he chuckles.

An unpleasant feeling dwells in Sawamura's chest. His blood froze up and his heart rate accelerated. "This isn't fair" Sawamura clutches at his chest like his heart was going to pop out at any moment.
"This Chris guy looks like a really formidable teammate. How can he possibly have lost his position to Miyuki? Why is..." Sawamura abruptly stands to his feet causing Chris to look up at him. "What's wrong?" He asked and stands as well.

The brunette clutches his fist, knuckles whitening at the tip. He was infuriated; pissed off that Miyuki was the cause to everyone's misery. "And he just laughs about it in our faces" he shakily inhales.

"I-I got to go" Sawamura grabs his bag. It hadn't even been an hour and the brunette was already tired out. This time it wasn't the heat.

Chris could see how frustrated he was. "Okay, I got to go too. Just came to visit" Sawamura gives him a confused look. "Visit? You aren't going to practice?" He asked in turmoil.

Chris scoffs and lays his hand on Sawamura's head. "You're adorable, anyways, no I don't practice. I have somewhere to be" he grins at the smaller brunette.

"Oh, okay. See you around Chris" Sawamura waves and walks to go find the coach after watching him disappear behind the building.

He finds coach Kataoka standing out in the entry of the field with two guys Sawamura remembered to be the principal and vice.

They seemed to be having a conversation so he doesn't bother them at first; however, the coach catches a glimpse of the brunette in the reflection of his shades and spins on his feet. The other two males does the same.

"Sawamura, is everything okay?" His voice is more easy-going than the first time they met. He couldn't tell if it was because the principal was there or cause he could read his expression.

He shakes his head though. "Y-Yeah, I have to leave though, I was able to take some pictures though. Can you tell Tetsu-senpai and the others that I will show them their pictures tomorrow?" He asked with urgency.

The coach stares at him for a moment but initially confirms his lease. "Go ahead, you don't have to take any pictures until the first game so be safe until then" he dismisses him.

Sawamura cracks a smile. "Yeah. See you till then coach" he bows and makes his way off campus.

By the time he was out of sight from the field, Sawamura finally lost it. He tugs at his hair and grits his teeth in agitation. "This isn't fair...this isn't right! Why does someone as nice looking as Chris have to suffer, Miyuki is such a jerk. The biggest jerk in humanity!" Sawamura stomps his feet as he catches sight of the school's exist.

Sawamura's blood boiled with so much animosity and resentment that he felt like his head was going to explode. His neck crawled with a uneasy burning sensation that he could never fathom.

And just when things couldn't get any worse-

"Hey there shorty" Sawamura stops in his tracks when he felt a light tug on his back before falling into muscular bulky arms. "S-Shorty!?" The brunette tries to pry himself out of the tight grip.

"W-What are you doing!?!" Sawamura asked when he noticed that it was, Daichi, his abuser.

"You didn't think I'd just let you slip by unharm right? You tried to talk back to me earlier, runt" he tightens his hold on Sawamura who pleads for him to stop. But Daichi didn't have any condolence to
He begins to drag him, but Sawamura didn't know where. All he could do was hope he'd get home without looking like complete garbage.

But that seemed inevitable when he found them in the bathroom and he felt pain surface around his lower waist.

When Sawamura got home it was around 10 at night. He managed to sneak in his house without his parents noticing and headed straight for his room. When he got there, he locked himself in and fell to his knees. His body ached with so much excruciating pain that parts of his body grew numb on him.

He begins kicking his clothes off, starting with his shoes. He felt claustrophobic, and couldn't breathe. Sawamura began ripping his jacket off.

He grunts at the pain of his clothes scrapping at the bruises that laid beneath them.

Salty tears slipped from the corner of his eyes as he free's himself. Everywhere on him was hurting. He couldn't stand it.

He gradually pulls himself up from the ground and examines his wounds through his mirror. They were ugly and horrific. The mutilated

Sawamura wastes no time: he begins to clean his wounds starting with the open cuts he got from resisting attempting to fight back. That doesn't stop him from conceiving a bruise on his lower side waist. He winces at the image of Daichi constantly kicking him there.

It takes thirty minutes for Sawamura to successfully clean and bandage himself properly.

By the time he was done he was too tired to worry about his homework or his job.

He sniffs and disregards the tears falling by wiping at them.

He drags his bag and retrieves his camera which was in perfect condition. Sawamura couldn't relate, but he prefer it to be him then his grade.

"What do people like them get out of this?" Sawamura asked himself in a subdued tone as he sets his camera down on his night stand.

His heart tightens when an image of Miyuki pops in his head. "What does he get out of this?" Daichi and Miyuki were quite similar to Sawamura. After all, they both make him feel terrible at the end of the day.

What their motive was for doing so remained unknown to the mutilated brunette. Did he even deserve to be treated this way? He had no recollection of having making enemies with anyone in the past.

He slugs in his bed to ease himself but the pain in his body skyrockets and doesn't seem to alleviate even when he was resting.

He elevates himself by bundling the sheets of his bed and the pillows. But even that seemed to be doing nothing.
Sawamura wanted to get an ice pack but he knew that meant running into his family, and he did not want to go through the drama of having his relatives worry about him.

Instead he turns in his bed to face his phone that lit up with a message. It was from Mei. "Call me" he read to himself through squinted eyes.

Sawamura didn't have it in him to talk with his best friend, but he didn't have much of a choice when his phone reverberates on his bed with his caller ID showing.

He grumbles as he answers. "What do you want?" Sawamura asked with exasperation. A chortle could be heard on the other end.

"I just wanted to check on my best friend in the world, geez" Mei scoffs, feigning emotional pain.

Sawamura closes his eyes for a brief moment at Mei's dramatic attitude before fluttering them back open.

"Wakana also called me saying she was worried, saying you come home late and is too beat to do anything; is everything alright?" His voice is full of concern and worry.

Sawamura cautiously lays on his stomach for comfort and wraps an arm over the pillow he was laying on while setting his head there.

"Ugh, I am fine" Sawamura murmurs as he thrust a hand through his disheveled hair. A hum of disbelief echoes on Mei's side. "I just can't do this anymore, getting from home to school and back with all of the events going is too much for me, I guess. I am just on the verge of moving to a school in Nagano

"Besides, I don't fit in at Seidou. Er, that's what it seems" Sawamura inaudibly muffles in his pillow.

A submissive sigh escapes Mei's lips. "Why waste time doing that? You'll end up leaving your friends and have someone else stress about completing your spread" he says in a husky tone. He sounded tired.

"I know it's complicated...what about you though? Are you okay?" Sawamura muffles in his pillow to switch the topic.

He could picture his friend giving him that overconfident smirk under his bags that hung from his eyes.

Sawamura winces when a a light shock of pain jolts from his leg to his upper thigh. He really did get beat up bad. The brunette sighs a painful breath, shielding it with a melodic hum to hide his suffering.

It was a good thing Mei was too tired to comprehend his change in tone from previous calls.

"Yeah" he yawns. "Just don't get yourself hurt over there okay? If something is going on you'll tell me right? I will be QUICK to run over there and pound them!"

"Oh jesus" Sawamura snorts. It wasn't long till Mei caught onto what he said.

"Ah, NO, WAIT! Don't think any further than that you, you're suppose to be the innocent one!" Mei was laughing so hard that he was wheezing.

Sawamura rests his head on his palm. "I am, I guess being with you has made me a bit rotten in the
head" he softly sniggers.

Mei gasped. "You are not wrong to be honest"

The two laughs to themselves at Mei's overuse in his voice. Now he sounded completely worn out and exhausted, like all of the energy from his little shriek took his voice away.

Sawamura smiles diplomatically. "Thanks Narumiya, talk to you later okay? I am tired" he stretches, a yawn leaving his own mouth.

"Kay!! Be safe, wanna goodnight kiss?"

"Goodnight Mei" Sawamura hangs up and lays his phone down on the bed beside him.

It didn't take long till Mei sent him a hateful text about him disregarding his love. But Sawamura laughs it off and rests himself on his bed.

Then he goes to sleep to rid his mind of the painful events of the day.
A New Experience

Chapter Summary

After receiving the Fall Tournament schedule the coach decides to hold a training camp and Sawamura loving the dreading faces of everyone goes as well.

I mean...as long as he doesn't share a room with Miyuki, what could possibly go wrong?

Chapter Notes

Feels great to be back!! I have been updating different books and making more chapters so expect a lot of updates!!

And since I am out of school for an entire week for break let the fun begin :)

The morning winds seemed to be treating Sawamura alright. He takes a sharp intake of the grassy air, but not a lot to hurt his still aching lungs.

The brunette throws his arms out in content when he stares up at the gleaming sun that shun brightly down on the city of Kokubunji.

He throws his arms down and turns around when he heard footsteps crunching closer to him. "Are you excited?" Tetsu asked as he passed the exuberant photographer that was easily voted to join the captain and club member on their trip to collect the schedule for the Fall Tournament.

Sawamura's lips curl into a euphoric smile. "It's a chance to miss school, any first year would take up the opportunity" he says as he walks in line with the captain.

It was hardly crowded, which was what the two older men were going for when they informed Sawamura earlier in the morning that they would leave around first block.

Not only the reason he got to miss class but Sawamura knew this meant skipping out on another beating from Daichi and being teased by Miyuki. Thinking about them suffering with his missing presence made him happy, but he knew eventually they would have to go back.

He tries not to frown.

"Besides, maybe you can tell me what kind of competition you guys are up against" the first year adds as he locks his hands in front of him.

Tetsu smiles. "Sounds like a plan" he exchanges an agreeable nod with the club sponsor.

When they entered the building the Fall Tournament drawings were being held at, loud chatter fills the three's ears. The corridors were scattered with impatient members of multiple schools waiting outside the lecture hall waiting to be called in to recieve their info.
Sawamura’s golden orbs scrutinize just about every person they passed. He scoots closer to Tetsu when a group of big men caught sight of him and devilishly smirked. Shivers descended down his spine as he turned to Tetsu.

"Are you sure these are teenagers?" The brunette asked when he saw one guy with a full on beard and mustache chugging down on a cup of soda. He could of fooled Sawamura as a middle-aged guy with two kids.

Tetsu lightly chortles at Sawamura’s benighted attitude. Instead of saying anything, Tetsu glides the latter in front of him so he wouldn’t get lost.

The three ultimately stops in a more isolated area away from the other competing schools to gather their thoughts. "Did you see Ichidai in the corner?" The club advisor, Oota Kazuyoshi, queries when taking a look at Tetsu.

The first baseman earnestly nods. "Yeah, Teito and Sensen are here as well" Tetsu notifies.

Sawamura props himself against the wall and melts in whatever information the two were speaking. The schools they talked about sounded formidable to him, in his opinion, the way they spoke sounded like they have raging resentment towards them.

The brunette grabs at his arm and checks out the bit of groups a few feet away from them. The guys were much more taller and buffer than he was. No doubt they came to just show off.

"I'm glad I am not playing against them, they all look scary" Sawamura muses before jumping when a shadow flings over him. He freezes in trepidation at the guy’s overall appearance; his knees buckling and sweat pouring from his temples.

He was much more taller and stern looking than any of the other guys he saw at the centre. Why did he look like he want to beat the crap out of Sawamura?

The first year profusely taps Tetsu, clinging onto his arm when he got his attention. But the captain doesn’t react with such apprehension. "Ah, Masatoshi, what a convience seeing you here" he holds his hand out for the more bulkier man to shake.

Still staring at Sawamura, the male says, "Yuuki, to you as well. Who is this little pebble you got with you?" His voice his husky and deep.

The brunette’s vulnerability forces him to whimper a soft shriek as he reclines deeper into Yuuki’s touch.

"Ah, this is Seidou's new baseball photographer" Tetsu enlightens with a soft smile. "He takes our pictures for yearbook" Harada's eyes shifted up to the senior. "Really?" He folds his arms in modesty.

Sawamura slowly shake his head to reconfirm.

"Tch, I thought you had a new player up your sleeve" he sneers before eyeing Tetsu mischievously. "That would be quite dirty of you guys" he shakes his head, unamused.

"Well we do have about a hundred people trying out at our school, who knows who has that unyielding potential the coach looks out for" he chuckles and lightly grips on Sawamura's shoulder.

Harada raises an uninteresting brow, "Is that so?" He strokes at his chin. The two, excluding Sawamura, gradually nods.
This time it was Tetsu's turn to spark the next question. "So are you drawing by yourself? Or is someone else from the team with you?" He asked with hidden interest.

After turning back to steal a glance at the hall that was slowly lowering with students entering the lecture hall, Harada takes his time to respond. "Just me" he turns on his heel.

"Get luck in the drawings, it would be ashamed if you had to go up against us and lost right before the season began" he slyly sniggers as he walks away.

The creases on Sawamura’s forehead furrow deeper from the disparage sentiment he picked up from his little farewell speech. Did he not think Seidou was seen as a daunting opponent?

It made Sawamura's stomach churn. With the solidified batting line-up and fielding positions given, the brunette was sure that nothing could dysfunction the team.

Slowly, Sawamura turns to Tetsu to see his casual unrelenting demeanor alter into a more sour and resolute mien. "U-Um, Tetsu, who was that?" The now timorous first year asked with evident hostility.

He was sure that Seidou could take down any future team they faced, but the way Harada portrayed his team sounded like they could go against just about any school they faced.

"That was Harada Masatoshi, the senior catcher at Inashiro Industrial" Tetsu says in a considerate tone. He looks down at the first year and kindly smiles. "They don't think we suffice enough to beat them, but everyone is optimistic about this year" He smiles back at the club sponsor.

"Well...I believe in you guys! I think we can win!" Sawamura jumps with skyrocketing buoyancy. He is sanguine about their certain victory; his face shows it.

The two older men both look at each other with undermining reassurance. Sawamura was quite the shining symbol for them right now.

Momentarily, Oota leads the two into the lecture hall that was filled with many rows of seats stretching from the front of the room towards the back. A banner with the name of the event hangs from the curtains of the oak colored stage; formally dressed men greeting with other student's before the drawings started.

They find a seat not far from the stage and files in beside a school unfamiliar to the brunette. He sits down first beside Tetsu and observes the room of anticipating students.

Everyone seemed to be getting along, but Sawamura didn't think it was to simply make amends if they ended up playing together in the near future.

When a spokesperson walked on the stage the room automatically falls silent and the students file into their assigned seats. Sawamura sinks into his seat when the meeting commences and fiddles with his fingers anxiously as the man welcomes all who can attend.

After the rather long introduction then the pledge, one-by-one students from other schools began picking a slip of paper from the inbox, others waiting to be called.

"Everyone seems to be on edge, is the Tournament that big of a deal?" Sawamura's voice seized when he saw Harada get up from his seat after being called.

His heart thawed from his intimidating appearance.
"Are you okay?" Tetsu whispers when averting his gaze from the stage where Harada stood to the shaking brunette inaudibly chattering on his nails.

Sawamura jerks his attention to meet the captains piercing caramel eyes. "O-Oh, yeah, it's just...that guy scares me"

Tetsu continues staring at him. "Don't worry, it'll be fine" he assures the younger Seidou student. "Harada just happens to give off that superior vibe when meeting new people, he is pretty cool when you get use to him" he lays a supportive hand on Sawamura's shoulder.

Without a moment a huge smile traces the latter's face. "O-Oh, okay!" Sawamura looks down at his hands enclosed in his thighs.

He didn't exactly know how to feel about Harada. He just didn't seem like the trustworthy one to him.

Too bad he isn't the only one.

The brunette jumps when the mention of Seidou echos the room. At the moment, it felt like all eyes fell on the three that came to represent the notorious school. When Sawamura briefly glances around the room he wasn't half wrong. Schools positioned near them had their eye on them.

The space from Sawamura's right side vanishes, and his eyes flutter up to see Tetsu already making his way over to the stage.

Tension augmented rapidly when the school was called. Seidou wasn't the only one receiving a cold welcoming though. "It looks like they want to pulverized us" the first year thinks to himself.

He stops when his eyes fell on a guy who just so happened to be staring at him. Sawamura jumps.

The guy was a handsome looking guy. He had silky jet black hair styled in a messy way, dark brown eyes and light skin. He seemed nice, like when he met Chris a few days back.

The guy gently waves at him, and timidly, Sawamura does the same. Did he know him from somewhere, or was he just being nice?

"I'm back" Tetsu clears his throat when he takes his original seat beside the quiet brunette. As the conference progresses the schools finally recieve their schedules in the end. The meeting didn't officially end till thirty minutes after ten.

"Do you need to use the restroom, Sawamura?" Tetsu asked when they left the lecture hall. Mr. Oota stands a few feet ahead near the entrance with the schedule in hand.

The brunette hadn't really needed to go during the hour and a half they were stuck in the lecture hall, but now that he was up and out it felt like he was about to explode at any moment. He quivers at the rush. "Y-Yes!" He shakes his head.

"Want me to take you?" Tetsu asked generously. Sawamura declines the offer, matter of fact, doesn't even hear it when he sprints between the crowd of loose students to find the bathroom himself.

It doesn't take him long, just a couple of minutes of going up and down halls. He closes the door behind him and spends the next few minutes doing his business. A sigh of relief escapes his lips when he walks out to wash his hands.

"That felt nice" he drools to himself as he scrubs his hands together after lathering the soap on his
hands. He washes the suds off his hands and dries them off then makes his way to the door.

He opens and steps to exit only to be met with a built, muscular chest. Stumbling back in surprise, Sawamura ends up tripping over his leg. Before a shriek could leave his lips Sawamura felt warmth take over his body; the floor getting higher and higher as he rises from the fall.

"Woah, good thing I have a fast reaction time, you would have been gone" A relief chuckle flows in Sawamura's ears. His eyes divert to meet the familiar dark brown ones he met in the meeting. "Y-You caught me" solace thickens in his voice.

The tall handsome male shoots him an impish look as he steadies Sawamura back onto his feet. Sawamura's heart drummed against his rib cage as he slowly pulls back from the latter.

A smirk dance across the handsome guy's lips as he holds his hand out, respectively. "Sanada Shunpei, and you?" Sawamura takes his hard callous hand into his more soft ones.

"...Sawamura Eijun" he sheepishly introduces himself and diverts his eyes to the tile floor.

The taller male bends down further so that he is eye level with the brunette. "Eijun? Nice name" he grins ardently, then straightens his posture to his average height.

The first years cheeks flushed a bright pink. "T-Thanks! You have a nice name as well" Sawamura chews back on his lips with nothing else to counteract on.

It was the first someone mentioned he had a nice name.

Chuckling, Sanada shoves his folded fist into the front pockets of his formal attire. He props himself against the frame of the door and intently sizes the brunette up.

"...so do you play baseball?" Sanada cocks his head in an innocent but curious manner.

Sawamura denies the question. "No, I am a photographer for my schools' team" he timidly enlightens with tainted cheeks. He fiddles with the hem of his sleeve as he idly stares up at the older male.

He watches as the taller guy's jaw vaguely slacks in disbelief. "Really? You have a nice figure for a pitcher" he ideally states.

Sawamura's face flared red. "Nice figure? What do you mean?" He quizzes, puzzled at the accusation.

The two moves over so that a guy entering the restroom had enough space to get through. Eventually, the two ends up walking out the way into the hall to freely talk.

Sanada rests himself against the grey colored wall and drapes his arms over his chest as he says, "I mean you have the body of a pitcher. You have some sort of austere attributes that makes you appear charming but brutal on the mound; you should try it" he recommends before he distracts himself with a group of three staring fixedly on the two.

Sawamura brushes his thumb over his whiten knuckles to ease himself from their intense gaze. "You think I should?" Sanada adamantly nods, a smile breaking onto his face.

"O-Okay, um, Sanada is it? Maybe I can watch you play sometime? I don't really have a lot of friends here so it would be nice to have someone on my side" The brunette distinctively shortles.

Sanada smirks at the offer. "Sure, of course. Our first game for the tournament starts Tuesday,
"wanna...?" He proposes with a hand thrusting into his already messy hair.

Without any further question Sawamura agrees to the straightforward proposal. It wouldn't hurt to cheer for another team right?

"I'll be there, at-?"

"10:15am" he promptly answers.

When his eyes briefly flicks from Sawamura to the two males approaching them, he bounces himself off the wall. "See you there Eijun, don't be afraid to come take pictures of me, too, kay? I'm quite the artwork" he winks at the brunette and saunters off before the two could meticulously inspect him.

Sawamura had no time to watch his retreating figure with the two older men stepping in his view.

"Did you finish using the bathroom?" The club president asked with little concern seeing he was preoccupied with someone else to even remember where they had to be by now.

Sawamura embarrassingly stammers, "y-yeah.." And walks alongside Tetsu as they exit the building and makes way to the personalise cab waiting for them outside.

"Who was that you were talking to?" Tetsu asked once they were in the cab and took off towards the school.

Sawamura mindlessly shrugs, recollecting his thoughts on the Sanada guy he met earlier. "His name is Sanada Shunpei...I don't really know much about him, we just sort of bumped into each other" a blush creeps onto his cheeks when the image of the much taller and muscular male cautiously holding him so he wouldn't fall.

He wipes at his cheeks, hoping to rid the burning sensation dwelling inside them. Tetsu eyes him with a skewed expression; his brows perfectly arch and small creases forming on his forehead.

"Really?" Tetsu relaxes under his spot as he looks over the schedule for the Fall tournament. Curiosity shook the first year who took notice of the captain doing so, and leans on his left so he has easy access of the paper.

Sawamura glances through the schedule and in the mist of interpreting the final markings he loses himself. He scrunches his nose in irritation as he makes out the first game Seidou was competing in on Saturday.

He was quite relieved that the name didn't read 'Inashiro', referring back to when the guy, "Harada was it?" warned them about going against the quite undefeated team.

His hammering heart cools against his chest as a puff of his warm breath slowly exits his mouth.

After a moment of letting the information sink in, Sawamura makes contact with Tetsu, who was still fixated on the schools they'd go against if they won.

"Akikawa is it? Are they a good school?" Sawamura pipes up as he anxiously plays with a lock of his hair. It was a remedy to his stress. And not being aware of the schools in the area made him more apprehensive than anyone else.

Tetsu only shrugs. "I don't think we've ever went against them" he sighs as he hands over the paper for Mr. Oota to preview.
"Ah" so they were all in the dark.

The other team couldn't say the same, since they were practically one of the teams shown around Tokyo like a universal trophy, tabs were always kept on them.

That made things all the more difficult.

"Huh? Akikawa?" Jun grumps with aggravation of the unfamiliar name rolling off his tongue like it was some sort of unspoken foreign language.

The center fielder digs his knuckles in his head as if he was trying to recall such a school.

"I don't think we've ever played them, never heard of em" he shrugs in futile as he hands the club sponsor back the schedule.

The odds of running into one of the limbs of the team was quite surreal if Sawamura asked. They had just gotten at Seidou not long ago on their way to administration when they bumped into the rambunctious player during lunch hour.

Jun slugs his hands back into his wrinkled pockets then exchanges an uncertain glint with Tetsu, who confirmed his theory with an agreeable nod.

"It doesn't hurt to watch a few clips of them, I am sure we have some" Tetsu notifies as he shuffles pass his friend. Sawamura meekly follows.

Jun grumbles incoherently to himself as he kicks an imaginary pebble. He sounded opposed to the idea but doesn't protest either.

"Wanna join us, Jun, to administration?" The captain changes the subject as he stares blankly at his best friend.

Jun snarls. "No, because every time I am there someone always have something for me to help them with and it interferes with my classes" he rejects, surprising Sawamura.

To the brunette, he seemed like the type of guy to do just about anything to get out of class. This was news to him.

A cackle erupts from the smaller male's throat. "Anyway, I'll see you guys later, and Sawamura, pictures?" Jun's voice deepens near the end, and darts his eyes over so they met with the warm golden ones; this makes him shake with positivity.

Withdrawing one of his hands out from his pockets, Jun waves at them, "See ya" and promenades off somewhere that was probably his next class.

Subsequently, the three finishes their way to the office, where they find the coach, dressed professionally, sitting at his desktop alternating between scanning papers to intensively staring and typing at his computer.
And...

"Wah, Kazuya?!!" Sawamura's face falls white when he spots the megane sitting on an unoccupied desk while swiping uninterestingly at his phone.

An impish glint in his amber brown eyes meets with Sawamura's faded ones. An inconspicuous, mischievous smile drapes onto his lips as he shoves his phone in the pocket of his pants.

Propping his arms behind him, he reclines onto the desk with his attention fixated on Sawamura. "Ah, Ei, came to visit me?" He fondly claps a hand over his chest.

"So thoughtful of you" he smiles close-eyed.

"Oh believe me, if I knew you'd be here I would of took my chances with Japanese History. I rather be in a coma there then be comatose by you" Sawamura remarks as he crossed his arms defensively.

Miyuki is silent for a while.

"You know what, I'll punish you later for that" a contemptuous facade falls on his face.

A shiver runs down Sawamura's spine from the everlasting stare until he anxiously whips his head to the coach, who was retrieving the Fall Tournament schedule from Mr. Oota.

The room falls silent then; Sawamura distracts himself by twirling his curly lock of hair that sticks out in the front for him to gain easy access to.

The tension supplements by the second, seeming to be even thicker than when they were in the lecture hall. It made Sawamura really wish he was in Japanese History right now.

Miyuki, who had been graciously patient, jumps from the counter and hovers behind the coach to check out the schedule as well.

Like the coach, his face doesn't falter from peeking at the paper.

The knots in Sawamura's stomach tightens. This didn't seem like a good thing to the photographer. Was the setup good or bad??

Finally, for what felt like decades, the coach strokes at his nicely brushed beard. "We will have a brief meeting right after classes let out. Afterwards, our three day training camp will commence" he confirms.

"Mother fuc-"

The coach shoots Miyuki a look before he could finish the sentence. His lips quickly seals.

Sawamura stifles a small laugh as the coach dismisses the group to return to class. "Training camp?" The brunette questions when he stares expectantly at the captain as they saunter out into the hall.

Tetsu nods in confirmation. "It's-

"Hell" Miyuki interjects when he pops up on the other side of Sawamura. The brunette arches an unrealistic brow and turns to Tetsu for more answers.

"We just work for three days straight from the dust of morning dew to the crack of dawn. It's a 10-12 hour long process each day" Tetsu sighs begrudgingly.
Despite him being captain and all, even he dreaded the excruciating long hours of soaking his uniform with sweat then falling asleep in it because he was too tired to get to the tub.

"Is it that bad?" Sawamura thought curiously as he stares down at the gray vinyl tile flooring. He wonders the kinds of training they undergo to achieve such skills. After all skill doesn't come naturally. He was actually looking forward to this.

The brunette winces when he feels a slight stinging sensation burn at the hill of his cheek. He slaps his hand onto the sensitive area and eyes Miyuki warily.

"It's hell" he quips dryly, as if reading his thoughts.

Sawamura narrows his eyes. "Why are you complaining? Isn't hell like your natural habitat or something?"

The first year was rewarded with a gaping Miyuki and a stifling Tetsu.

The bespectacled catcher denies this. "You earn your one measly point, but like I said..." He does a 180 so that he is walking backwards while facing Sawamura with a derisory look. His hands locked behind his head.

Seeing that look on his face motivated Sawamura to slap him.

"You'll get your punishment eventually" He scathes with disdain and turns back on his heel before strutting off down a hall that led to two double doors.

Repeating what Miyuki says to him, the goosebumps sprung up on his skin and the hair on his neck erects.

What he had planned to him did not excite Sawamura one bit.

"Do you two have some sort of secret history together?" Tetsu's casual stoic tone enhances in the quiet hall. To the captain, they seemed to have such a comical way of showing their hatred for each other.

Sawamura jumps at the mention of their complicated relationship and hugs his arms around his waist.

His brows hovers tiredly over his eyes, the sudden euphoric feeling in his throat dissipating into a more unsettled comportment.

"You could say..." Memories of how he use to be treated by Miyuki came flooding back to mind. His grip around him tightens when the bigger picture of why he began hating Miyuki stirs around in his head.

An inaudible whimper leaves his thin lips.

Sawamura's heart hammers against his chest; he tries to compose himself, tries to not break down in the middle of the hall.

He bites on his already bruised lips as he continues reflecting back on his past. No doubt Sawamura tries to ignore the cruel reminiscence his mind puts him through every now and then. It use to be easy during junior high but now that he had Miyuki back into his life it was something he couldn't ignore.

Tetsu's eyes suspiciously inspects the first years posture as he continues cowering in silence. He was deeply curious about what went on between the two, but now didn't seem like the time. Not when he
appeared mentally unstable.

"Want me to walk you to class?" The senior offers with an amiable smile.

Sawamura jerks his head to meet the orbs of Tetsu's.

It warmed him in the inside that his senpai was caring enough to make sure he got to class safely. Unlike a certain big-mouthed, insolent being.

Since they weren't too far from the first year floor it was the right choice. "Okay" Sawamura accepts the offer.

The two walks silently together, communicating about baseball most of the time until they reached Sawamura's classroom.

When the teacher opens the door revealing the two Sawamura begins feeling insecure when the whispering commences. He hears the gossip about Tetsu being a reliable captain for the team and being one of the sexiest looking guys.

Then there was Sawamura, who everyone questioned his motive being around them. Some, who were there, mentions the three (including Tetsu) seniors from the team that came to visit the freshman building the previous day.

"Jesus cri-" Sawamura's eyes dully scans the room until they fall on Daichi, who wasn't normally in his third hour. He was intently staring at him with hidden resentment.

The brunette frowns. "What's his problem?" Sawamura quizzes when he notices that his eyes wouldn't leave him.

He ignores the intense gaze when he felt Tetsu tap his back. "Be good Sawamura, Seidou's baseball team needs their dependable photographer" he states aloud.

Sawamura turns and meekly waves the captain a shy 'goodbye'.

"See you afterwards"

The teacher closes the door subsequently, and directs Sawamura into the day's lesson and what he missed in the first thirty minutes of class.

The brunette slips in his seat in the third row and starts on the work given to him. Regardless of the mounts of time he ignores the continuous burning sensation at his neck; Sawamura can't seem to shake the fact that he was being watched.

He had an inkling of who it may be, but he wasn't going to turn around to justify his claim.

Most likely because he knew looking back may result in losing a body part.

Truth be told, Sawamura was scared shitless. He tries to rid his mind of the trepidation that he fears might come later during the day. He anticipates for the worse now in hopes of it feeling not as bad later. And usually it never turns out in his favor. It never does.

To distract himself, Sawamura begins thinking about how he should introduce the pictures to the first years.

Showing the images on the camera might be a bit anticlimactic for half of them (not to mention they will be in the sun so they will only see partial of the picture) so he had quite the idea of how he was
going to advertise the start of the Fall Tournament.

So when the last few minutes of class shrews on to an end, Sawamura informs his fourth period teacher of the little deed he planned on kindling for the baseball team.

Without revealing any background information as to why, his teacher allows him to do so, and Sawamura skips to the library where he spent the next hour embroidering a self-made three by four poster that horizontally expressed the events of what the Fall Tournament was going to look like.

It was basically to promote Seidou students to come out and support them.

"Ah, that's pretty cool" a low casual tone husk from behind.

Sawamura frantically covers the computer screen protectively then whips his head around only to see Toujou behind him. "O-Oh! It's just you Toujou" the brunette sputters as he sits down in his seat.

The amicable teen's eyes widen. "Who did you think I was?" He whispers as he shuffles in a seat nearby and scoots closer to the latter.

Sawamura sweatdrops. He didn't really know who was behind him. He just reacted because he didn't want anyone seeing the poster yet. But the compliment boost his confidence quite high.

"You really think it's good?" Sawamura gushes with excitement when he checks out the picture himself.

He was quite pleased thus far.

Toujou nods excessively. "You've captured everyone's capabilities really well, did they tell you to do this?" He asked with in a surprised tone.

"Nah, thought I do it without say. To promote them y'know" his cheeks burn when he admires his work again. His eyes read over "Hit towards the sky! Come check out Fall Tournament featuring our very own schools' baseball team!" Before they lace down to the perfectly contrast players that fused with the blue background perfectly.

Kuramochi's picture was first, then Ryousuke and Jun. It was in their batting order the flyer continues in, reviewing information about each of their stats and why the students should come watch.

He used some of the gossips he heard about the players from students all around and incorporated the information into context.

For example, Kawakami's little info tab read: Shy, adorable, and introverted isn't all this little pitcher has going for him, not when he is in the center of the diamond. Who is known in school for awkwardly stammering and idly standing around is actually a walking flame with a burning passion to lead his fellow teammates. He doesn't disappoint! Come cheer for Kawakami!

And so on.

The pictures he had captured of them during their last preliminary game he used for the poster. Because they were off guard and didn't know when they were being watched made the pictures seem even more real.

Sawamura was content with his work.
"This is amazing! Do you want to make one for the cheerleaders as well? I'll send you the pictures." Toujou pleads while batting his small lashes rapidly.

Sawamura made a face. "This alone was a lot to do..." He groans with dread.

"Maybe when I find the motivation" he commits and begins finishing up the last bit of the poster.

"That's fine, I know you work hard even though Shinji doesn't believe it" Toujou chuckles and spins half way in his chair so he is facing the table.

"Anyway," Sawamura starts as he continues editing the poster. "Why are you here?" He deBriefs as he forwards himself onto the marble desk.

Toujou makes a face of remembrance, almost as if he had forgotten. "I was so mesmerized by your work that I nearly forgot" he blushes sheepishly.

Sawamura hums with understanding.

"I was running an errand for my teacher actually, so I'll catch you later..?" Toujou stands from his seat.

Sawamura waves dismissively before diverting back to the computer screen. It was when the bell rung that he finished the final touches to the poster and then printed them.

"They came out perfectly" Sawamura profoundly states with content as he examines the medium sized posters. They came out just the way it showed on the computer.

"Did they?"

Sawamura turns around to see the blonde guy from the second string. He looked completely different from being in his uniform, but he knew it was him due to the way his hair waved around.

"U-Um" Sawamura stammers as the guy swipes the papers from his grip before he could even look at the senior properly.

"H-Hey, give that back!" Sawamura hissed as he reaches for the papers. The blonde slams his palm onto Sawamura's face to prevent him from getting any closer to him.

"Be quiet, this is a library. Have manners first year" he counters as he glances at the papers.

It didn't take long to see his grimacing face unfold. "Ah, are you advertising for the first stringers or something, waterboy?" The blonde curtly scowls as he glared at the images of the line up.

Sawamura pulls away from him. "D-Don't see it as a bad thing! I was only using the pictures I had at the moment and not all of the first stringers are on the poster s-so please don't ge-"

"Shut up" The blonde thrust the papers at the brunette's chest.

"I get it" he mutters.

He folds his arms submissively. His hardened gaze freezes Sawamura in place. It was hard to believe someone who represents Haruichi in the way could have such a demonic personality. "H-He's like Onii-san" Sawamura swallows a hard lump in his throat.

"I-I'm sorry!" The brunette apologizes aloud, dragging attention their way but also receiving a few disturbed glares.
Ignoring them, Sawamura glances down at the posters and attempts to iron away the wrinkles with his hands. He wanted them to hang perfectly around the halls of the different floors and buildings.

"Apologizing isn't going to make up for the years we've lost" The pessimism in the blonde's voice drills itself into Sawamura's head. His blood cools and his chest suffocates him in realization.

As he watches the retiring figure exit his way out of the library Sawamura couldn't help but feel sympathy for him.

It wasn't how defeated and oppressed he sounded either. He was speaking in terms for all who couldn't surpass those of the first string to get a chance in the spotlight. Having to waste three years in a school where they assume success was inevitable soon became their demise, and they wither and fall before the first stringers as if they were gods; and to them, they were only seen as pons to the coach.

Guilt drenches Sawamura as he thinks it over. Students who continue working their ass off knowing they won't be used hurts him. He knew he wouldn't be able to do it; to live with regrets and stay at the school hoping for a chance.

He knew long ago Seidou lived up to their name. Like hell they were going to ruin their chances of winning. In a way, they were kind of like Inashiro. "I know it's unfair and it hurts...but somethings in this world doesn't change regardless how hard you try to accept the reality" Sawamura howls over in his spot as he thinks back to that day.

He knew this from the start: that nothing in this world came free.

"M-Miyuki" Sawamura grips onto his chest trying to get the words to fall out of his mouth. But he didn't have the strength. He couldn't breathe.

The more he clings to his breath-

Sawamura grabs his bag and zips out of the library without another thought. He sprints to the bathroom and locks himself in from the inside without no one being in.

He takes a few deep breathes then drops to his knees and hurriedly rummages in his bag for his inhaler.

It didn't take long to find.

Pulling the inhaler out from the bag, Sawamura wraps his lips around the mouthpiece then slams his finger down onto the canister, feeling the familiarity gust of medication that enters his mouth and makes way to his lungs.

Crying out from the overwhelming anxiety, Sawamura falls onto his side and rolls on his back and stares up at the dim ceiling.

He really disliked Miyuki. But if Sawamura had to be honest he really did wish things didn't happen the way they were suppose to in the past. Other then that they might have had a chance to be good friends.

But it didn't happen that way and there was no changing the past.

After all who could like someone that nearly gotten him killed?
Orange and pink streaks dust the skies with a roomy afternoon setting. The orange-brown leaves hanging on to it's last hope of thread from the tree falls down onto the concrete sidewalk, woefully expressing the season of Fall. It was warm but chilly, all the right time for the baseball team to mark the start of the training camp.

"Here you go now, be safe, okay?" Sawamura's mom pinches her son's cheek as she hands him his bag of clothes.

Sawamura felt humiliated.

"I-I will mom" he blushes as he accepts the bag and pulls her into a quick but tender hug.

"If anything happens, please call us, you know Wakana and I worry a lot about you right?" She cutely huffs, aware of her child's stubborness to take things into his own hands.

She nudges her head over to the feminine brunette that stood a few feet away kicking her feet at the leaves for entertainment. "Don't upset her, okay? Women as supportive as her don't come very often you know" she winks.

"M-Mom, I-It's not like that!" Sawamura hisses in a low but scornful manner. His cheeks were beginning to explode a bright red that his mother has never seen before. It was quite amusing to watch unveil.

She snorts and pats him on the back. "Lighten up, Eijun" she remarks with an impish glint in her eyes. A determined smirk laces his plump lips. "Just saying, I want grandchildren" she quickly kisses him on the cheek before he could react, and hops back when he does so.

Sawamura's whole body was purging with heat. He could barely move, matter of fact, rebuttle at his mother's ludicrous statement. Sweats like bullets pours down his face.

"Oh, Waaaakaaanaa" His mother sing songs to grab her attention. She gestures the teen over.

"Mom!" Sawamura shot but she graciously ignores him and says, "Come say bye to Eijun, we are leaving in a minute" then sends another teasing wink at her son.

"See you in three days" she waves then makes her way to the car that awaited for the two at the entrance of the school.

Sawamura felt betrayed. He knew to never trust his mother when it came to romance but did she really have to put him on the spot? It was like she was rushing him into a relationship, then he'd be called irresponsible if he gotten her-

"What!? I would never do such a thing to Wakana! I can't even bare to-" sudden lewd images began popping up in his head.

"I CAN NEVER COMMIT!"

"Sawamura" Wakana hums in a passive aggressive tone as she digs her knuckles into the sides of the brunette's head when she stalks up from behind.

This startles him, emanating a fearful cry as he grabs her balled up knuckles to pry them off.

"Why are women much stronger pissed?!!"
He jumps when her fingers poke at his cheeks. "You better be safe okay? I won't forgive you if you come back with a bruise!" She ruefully pouts and averts her glistening eyes from meeting the warm golden ones.

"I-I promise" he sputters when he faces her. She leans forward into his face. "Pinky promise?" She smiles and holds her small finger up with lingering worry.

Sawamura couldn't believe the amount of worry in her eyes despite the training camp being fixated on the team players. "Pinky promise" Sawamura entwines his pinky with hers.

Their fingers don't break for a while. He watches her stare at their locked fingers and after a moment of standing there, she pulls him into a tight embrace.

"Don't get hurt, text me, okay?" She looks up at him while buried in his chest. Her face spoke volumes of seriousness.

Sawamura smiles and ruffles her hair.

Wakana felt thankful her cheeks were deep enough to not be seen by him, otherwise she would of melted. "I will, see you soon, Wakana" he pulls away when he hears the guys approaching behind them.

"And if any of those guys mess with you, I'll handle them for you!" She exclaims and proves this by getting into a fighting stance, the playfulness in her completely drained.

Sawamura snorts at this. "I'll be fine" he chuckles.

She gushes warmheartedly at him.

The staring goes on for what seemed like ages until they were interrupted by Kuramochi and Miyuki jumping in. "Are you going to stop ogling your friend and actually get on the bus?" The megane wraps an arm around Sawamura's neck.

Kuramochi winks at Wakana, loving her choice in clothing.

Her eyes widen at his flirtatious ways. Her lips pull into a tight line.

"Kuramochi Youichi, it is a pleasure to meet you, Miss...?" He holds his hand out to greet her.

"Totally not into you" Miyuki whispers.

Kuramochi shot him a dirty glare while Sawamura covers his mouth, not taking notice of the contact Miyuki was inhibiting. And if he did, he was doing a good job at not cringing under his touch.

"Um, Aotsuki Wakana" The feminine timidly introduces herself as well and shakes his hand.

Miyuki nudges Sawamura in the side as if saying, 'watch this', and says, "If I were you, Wakana? I'd wash my hands after touching him. It doesn't even matter what hand he touches you with...matter of fact, disinfect your hand in a tub of hand sanitizer; it's that bad" Wakana's face scrunched up in disgust as she warily peeks over at the seething shortstop.

Sawamura's jaw slacked in shock.

"Erm.." Wakana mutters.
"D-Don't listen to this cunt...I am a civilized, clean human being" Kuramochi cuts himself off. "I am also the fastest person on the team, at everything" he smirks full of pride.

"Ooh, is that why your last girlfriend left you?" Miyuki cocks his head.

Sawamura's face heated from the vulgar joke.

"You know what, I lost my chance, I'ma get on the bus" Kuramochi shamefully waves at Wakana, who is stifling her laughter from the dirty jokes as well.

"Yeah, you go do that skippy" Miyuki sniggers and hides himself behind Sawamura so that he didn't hurt him.

"Shut the hell up and don't take long" Kuramochi quips from a distance.

Wakana was still laughing. "Kuramochi is...interesting..." She strolls with an innocent smile.

"Ah, he is the horniest person I ever met in my life, I am not kidding when I say to clean your hands...good" Miyuki devilishly chuckles and unwraps his arms from around Sawamura, who was redder and hotter than the sun itself.

He was seeing them in a new light now.

"Right.." Wakana awkwardly chuckles and turns to Sawamura.

"Don't forget to text me" she says with one last wave then walks to go leave with his mom.

Sawamura watches her leave, but gets caught short when Miyuki steps in the way. "Don't be getting naughty ideas now" he clicks his tongue with sinister.

Sawamura's eyes widen. He opens his mouth to protest, but Miyuki shakes his head with disappointment. "Don't feel shameful, we all have our moments. If you ever feel that way always go to Kuramochi. He has magazines and tapes" Miyuki whispers the last part and watches as Sawamura uncomfortably breaks down.

Seeing him so stiff amuses him.

"Time to head to the bus now! I'll make sure to tell Kominato to switch seats with you so you and Kuramochi can exchanged sexual desires" Miyuki holds up a promising pinky then meanders to the bus.

Mortified, and with nothing left to say, Sawamura follows Miyuki to the bus.

When they get on, everyone greets Sawamura with open arms. Miyuki makes his way to the back of the bus while Sawamura shuffles through to find a spot.

"Hey, Sawamura you can come sit with me if y-"

"Nope" Sawamura happily rejects Kuramochi's offer and takes an empty seat behind Kawakami and Shirasu.

Mild laughter escalates around the bus as Sawamura withdraws the posters from his bag. Since they were still waiting on the Takashima-sensei to return with the last bit of his belongings Sawamura thought it'd be a good time to show the team the flyers he had posted around school while waiting for his mom to arrive.
"Hey guys" Sawamura stands to his feet so that everyone could see where he was. They all give him their undivided attention.

"Want to see something I made that has your pictures imprinted?" He raises the medium sized flyers, igniting curiosity throughout the bus.

The players scatter to their feet in a millisecond and races over to the seat where Sawamura sat, individually he hands them all a copy of the flyer.

They spend the next few moments scrutinizing the details embellished on the paper. It was quite eye-catching.

"Wow, Sawamura this is impressive" Kawakami gawks with astonishment as he peeks over the material. Hearing the heart-warming compliments made Sawamura's heart throb. It felt nice to be appreciated; admired for the little things he was able to do to get supporters for the team.

Jun slams his hand on Sawamura's head and roughly shakes his head, his fingers digging into his scalp. The brunette winces at the faint pain grazing at his head.

"This is amazing Bakamura!" He harrumphs honorably then pats him in the shoulder a bit too hard that the first year almost bumps into Kawakami's seat in front of him.

Sheepishly, Sawamura fixes his disheveled hair when Jun removes his hand. "T-Thanks" he diffidently stammers as he relaxes back into his seat.

"These actually came out pretty good" Tanba blandishes with a suppprtive smile.

"Not too shabby" Ryou's alluring hum springs into Sawamura's ears.

"I came out pretty good" Kuramochi cackles with his scandalous laugh.

The compliments warms Sawamura internally. Dynamites were setting off in his cheeks, masking an even darker shade of red. The knots in his stomach tightens with ecstacy and his skin itches with heat.

He had never been in such a position to recieve an abundance of blandishments so this was new to him. He could only react by burying his face deep into his puffy white sweater.

This was the first and he felt very special about it.

Sawamura didn't really have a lot of friends aside from Narumiya growing up, apart from attending different schools he was mostly alone. He didn't grow up with this much support so this was quite exhilarating.

"Why don't we show coach?" Tetsu suggested from his seat. "Ugah!" Masuko emphatically bellows.

"Keep up the good work, Sawamura" the players encourage him as they head back to their seats when Takashima-sensei appeared on the bus.

Flustered, Sawamura packs the rest of the papers in his bag and hauls his legs over on the empty seat beside him so he was leaning on the wall for support.

He wrenches his legs closer to his chest so that the warmth from his chest to his legs binded together. Sawamura couldn't help the bubbly feeling emitting on his face as he thinks back to what the players thought about him.
It was intoxicating; invigorating.

It made him anxious for the training camp. He didn't know what the players were fearing but he wanted to make sure he was there to capture all of the moments interchanged between the team when moments were right.

Sawamura also thought that attending the camp would give him the experience of an everyday baseball player so he could better understand the sport.

"I can also see how the team is able to interact with each other on and off the field"

He thinks to himself with ideas flowing in and out of his mind. A smile creeps onto his face as he begins to wonder how life with the Seidou baseball team would be like. Then, as if reality hits him in the face, he thinks, "Wait who am I sharing a room with?"

Because he knew being with one person can determine his mood for the next three days.

Chapter End Notes

Did you enjoy??

:)
The Works Of The Training Camp

Chapter Summary

When the start of the training camp commences, Sawamura finds himself sustaining an injury. What a good way to start things.

(Not much of a summary, but eh)

Chapter Notes

This chapter actually took me a good three days to make, only because I had to come up with a few extra details to strengthen the chapter for it to tie into next. Then you already know a whole chapter itself takes me at least 3-6 hours to perfect minus the little errors. Thing is, I got to update early in the morning! I am proud of myself!!!

I stayed up all night (literally) previewing. I hate seeing mistakes, so when I check a last chapter I published and I missed an error I curse myself out XD!!

Enjoy the chapter!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The training camp would be taking place in a reserved camp site in western Tokyo near the border of Kunititachi. The private area was rented for the amount of days the school was paying to stay. They first day of camp would be starting Wednesday, which was tomorrow. This gave everyone the opportunity to settle in their assigned cabins for the night to relax and prepare for the next day.

Night time already drew near by the time they arrive. The sky was already pitch black and fog drenched in tree's all around.

Most of the players were up during the duration of the two hour drive either reading shoujo manga, listening to music, or enjoying the scenery of the trip. Their energy didn't seem to diminish the second the bus ride started. However, it was a lot more quieter.

The soothing ride of the bus driving down the narrow paths and the rendering quietness drags Sawamura into a deep sleep during the time.

No one noticed with his shrunken body seeping into the seats despite his light snores and abrupt turning. But the inaudible noises cancels out due to Masuko's own deafening snores.

The bus finally pulls to a stop. Everyone leisurely begins strolling their bags out, exiting the bus after the adults when the rules were given to them.

The bus was practically empty. Miyuki, who had been just about the only person aside from Tetsu and Jun stationed at the back, spots the sleeping brunette. He was almost thrown off guard with his music blasting in his ears.
Pausing his music, Miyuki pulls his earplugs out and over his ears, taking in the fatigued brunette even though he hadn't been through the training they suffered from.

He didn't want to give a rude awakening, so he thought he'd just wake him up and head on in his cabin.

"Ei" Miyuki nudges Sawamura in the shoulder with his free hand, shaking his body until he turns. He doesn't budge. "Eijun" he taps Sawamura's cheek this time.

Nothing.

Miyuki purses his lips. He strips himself free of his bags and sits them in the seat across from them. He takes the empty seat beside the younger brunette, fixing his legs so that they elevated on his lap. He scoots closer, holds up a free hand, then caresses his fingers down the first year's cheek.

Sawamura involuntarily shivers, swatting his hand away when Miyuki would poke at him. "L-Leave me alone..Miya" the clearly tired photographer groans, snuggling on the window.

Now, Miyuki felt insulted. Feeling no such sympathy he goes and pinches Sawamura's available earlobe then tugs so that his nails dug into his skin. This emits a loud shriek from the first year.

"Ow!" Sawamura slaps a hand over his ear, getting a small piece of Miyuki's finger when he retracts his hand.

He is perplexed for a moment. Sawamura turns to face Miyuki and shoots a dirty look. His brows furrowed and his eyes squinted.

"W-What do you want?" He didn't seem happy about having Miyuki being the first person he see's waking up. Sawamura began rubbing at his eyes.

Feigning hurt, Miyuki crawls up from his seat and leans on the pair in front of them for support so that he was out of range from an impending attack. "I was just trying to wake a friend up instead of having you spend the night with the crickets and birds" he says in a sickening soft tone that makes Sawamura's stomach lurch.

However, the idea didn't seem as bad compared to having him as a possible roommate. "I'll take my chances" Sawamura snaps, unzipping one of his bags that held his blanket to prove so.

Miyuki snorts at his straightforward demeanor. "You know" the second year pauses, leaning down when Sawamura looked up at him with disinterest. "You have been very naughty to your senpai lately" he pokes Sawamura in the cheek.

Heat crawls into the pit of the first year's stomach. Leaning back, Sawamura cautiously eyes Miyuki while crossing his arms.

"So?"

Miyuki eyes Sawamura with surprise. He seemed to not be skeptical about what he could do. Only adds to the older male's fun.

"You do realize we are the only ones on the bus, right?" a sketchy grin stretches across Miyuki's face.

Sawamura gwacks with disbelief. "...we are?"
He goes to stand, but Miyuki pushes him down. This surprises the younger male, who was more awake than before.

"Miyuki, what are you doing?" Sawamura says in apprehension as he scoots back so he is pressed against the wall of the bus. He watches as Miyuki blocks his only portal of exit by sitting in the seat beside him. They face each other for a couple of seconds, Sawamura anticipating anything while Miyuki only watched in contentment.

Then the gap between them begins to steadily decrease. Sawamura's heart suddenly begins to ram against his rib cage and heat drenches his body the closer he got.

He holds his hands up to defend himself against Miyuki. And at this point his palms were in contact with his broad chest. Sawamura's breath hitches from the contact.

That doesn't stop Miyuki from lacing his callus hands with Sawamura's soft ones. He holds them firmly so that the younger male doesn't rebel. It seemed to work because Sawamura could barely feel himself move even if he did budge.

Matter of fact, what was breathing?

It was when he spoke that Sawamura realized how close he was to him. His face was inches away from his, but close enough for him to clearly receive a message. "You should of thought twice about talking back to your senpai" the megane whispers provoking the hairs on Sawamura's neck to stand.

Goosebumps unviels over his body, suddenly feeling cold despite them being close and on the bus.

Now they were too close.

Sawamura was sure Miyuki could hear his heart trying to break out of place. It was impossible to not. It felt like his heart was promoted to work his ears off because that was all Sawamura heard.

"M-Miyuki" Sawamura stammers, his hands trying to unlink from his. If he wasn't mistaken he could of sworn Miyuki's grip on him tightened.

Averting his eyes from their binded hands to those derisive caramal eyes, Sawamura continues, "what are you trying to do?"

Trepidation overcomes the first year's body. He didn't know what to expect. He was exhausted already. Going against Miyuki at this hour wouldn't prove a thing to him.

No words were exchanged at first, and it scares Sawamura to death. He was too busy staring at Miyuki's amber colored eyes-overwhelmed with anxiety- that he doesn't feel his fingers leave his and ascend up his body.

He didn't know how he didn't feel Miyuki's fingers remove, but the second her broke the hypnotic spell he was under and realized it was already too late.

A stinging but tingly feeling drills into the sides of Sawamura's body, engendering a high squeal unfamiliar to the ears. The timbre of his voice high-pitched than his original.

Miyuki swirves his fingers, drumming them up and down his sides and then under his pits. Rescinding his hands back before they were caught, he pokes at Sawamura's neck then his thigh, and after, his stomach around to his back.

This elicits a startled squeal from the younger brunette, who attempts to grab at his hand to prevent
him from going any further. "I'm tired, Kazuya!" Tears prick at the corner of his eyes as he tries to push his hands back. His defenses were starting to weaken.

Miyuki loves the reaction. He tickles at his sides again, this time on the other side with his free hand. "Miyuki!" Sawamura screams, as he, again, tries to grab at his hands that were constantly harassing his sides.

Miyuki chortles with amusement, continuing his dirty work.

"Kazuya, stop!" Sawamura tries not to laugh, but falls victim to his punishment. He didn't fully expect something this low but it was what got him weak.

Sawamura wheezes. "Will you behave next time?" Miyuki speaks over his laughter trying to avoid the kicking he was doing to pry the catcher off of him.

A tear rolls down his cheek. "Y-You don't deserve it" Miyuki wiggles a finger at his stomach, then his neck.

More frivolous laughter emits from Sawamura. It was quite contagious, which even had Miyuki smiling.

He stops when Sawamura finally exclaims, "If you don't stop I am going to pee!" still crying of joy from the little dispute. He wraps his arms around his waist to defend any impending attacks Miyuki might of had in mind, panting heavily.

The older male cheekily grins. "So you'll behave this time, right?"

Sawamura pouts, stubborn to apologize. It was such a childish act. "Ei" Miyuki hums, holding up a threatening finger that the younger male successfully sways away, a small smile forming on his lips.

"Fine" he exhales deeply, trying to catch his breath.

Miyuki raises a brow, catching his breath as well. "Fine? You don't respond to your senpai with a bland 'fine'" He scolds with an ashamed look.

Sawamura clicks his tongue against his teeth. He fights the urge to not smile, subconsciously feeling the tingles Miyuki's fingers would produce when tickling him. He still felt like he was being played with and squirms in his spot.

"You're such a bully, Kazuya" red taints Sawamura's cheeks as he glares at him with an evil eye.

Miyuki didn't seem hurt. "Thanks for the compliment" he cackles softly before their little friendly quarrel was interrupted by Kuramochi jumping onto the bus.

The two diverts their head to the shortstop, who was disappointed in finding them still aboard. They both melted in their seats, deprived of all energy.

He stalks over to the two. He comes up so fast that Sawamura was barely able to pull himself away from the Seidou catcher.

"What the hell are you two still doing on here?!" He sounded pissed, more frankly towards Miyuki.

Sawamura apologetically eyes him. He rubs at his sleeve, digging his arms between the gap of his legs. He had lost track of how long they've been on board thanks to Miyuki distracting him.

"What does it look like? We're bonding" Miyuki flashes the most disturbing smile ever known to
man. He even leans back on Sawamura to present their 'growing' friendship.

Kuramochi's eyes narrow in disbelief. "You are such a bad influence" the second year grabs Sawamura's free hand and pulls him up from the seat. His eyes dart over to meet with Miyuki's.

"I was trying to find you because Takashima said to discuss who Sawamura got to room with, but I don't trust you for a second, so he'll be with Masuko and I" Kuramochi finalizes with a menacing glare.

He grabs at Sawamura's bags then hands them to him, who meekly thanks him as he adjusted the weight of his bags on his shoulders.

Miyuki leans back in his seat with a hostile expression. "No fair Kuramochi, I think we should let Ei decide that" he impishly grins after encasing his arms over his chest, flickering his gaze at Sawamura.

The brunette tenses up. Red creeps onto his cheeks. "I-It doesn't really matter..." Sawamura smiles up at Kuramochi who returns the warm smile.

The bus shakes as Miyuki gets up from his seat to stand as well. He smiles wickedly at the two. "Whatever then, bye, Ei" the megane winks as he grabs his bags and brushes by, their hands solidly making contact.

Sawamura frowns, holding his hand up as he stares at his palm where the connection was made.

He didn't know why, but he felt like he hadn't gotten off of Miyuki's punishment list.

Worry fills into his mind.

His cheeks flares a crimson red as he holds his hand down in front of him. Mindlessly, he circles his thumb over the area the small burn was inflicting on.

Kuramochi hugs an assuring hand over Sawamura. "Intimidated? Miyuki gives off the aura sometimes" he grins as they both made their way off the bus.

The cool air kisses at Sawamura's skin, provoking a shiver to run down his spine. Kuramochi chuckles at this as the first year hugs at his arms for warmth. He was sure his mom packed him a jacket, but he didn't want to put in time to rummage through the bag to find out.

"Does he have to be a jerk though?" Sawamura grumbles inarticulately, trying not to let the tickle fest divert his reasons for disliking him. He wasn't sure Kuramochi heard him but it didn't matter if he did anyway.

In spite of him being tickled by Miyuki, it still didn't diminish any of the built up animosity he still had for him.

Kuramochi snorts while masking a hand over his mouth. "That guy is a jerk to everyone, I can't imagine anyone having to put up with him. They would deserve a whole trophy"

"I deserve a damn Nobel Peace Prize" Sawamura deadpans with thinned out lips.

This sends Kuramochi laughing. "You're funny, Sawamura" he chuckles as they approach a line of cabins.

Some of the players were already going in and out of them, dressed in night clothes such as sweats and tees. They held bats and wore headbands, given the impression that they were working out.
Um, are they going to practice?" Sawamura's cynical tone barges into earshot. He was baffled; surprised they even had energy after a day of school and a long two hour drive.

Kuramochi shakes his head. "Yeah, it's how we occupy ourself when we are waiting for dinner, or just the rush of the tournament" he enlightens with a small shrug.

Sawamura nods in understanding as he watches the third year trio make way to an isolated area away from the cabins.

"Are you going to practice?" Sawamura asked as Kuramochi opens the door to their assigned cabin. They enter, the second year allowing Sawamura to go in first.

He takes in the view of the room. It wasn't much but it seemed comfortable regardless. It was more like how he expected when he spotted a video game system and a stack of wrestling magazines.

Initially, he spots Masuko laying in his bed eating a cup of pudding.

Kuramochi scoots by to grab at a bat that laid propped up against the counter the TV stood upon.

"Yep" he responds then glares at Masuko who was still eating. "And he is too" he pokes the round male in the belly. "Because Masuko needs to lose weight before the start of the tournament" he emphasizes in a snarl manner.

Sawamura slides into an empty bottom bed that hasn't seemed to be claimed.

"I know you might get bored quickly while we are out with dinner still being made, so I set up my video game system for you" Kuramochi benevolently asserts while pointing to the already set up system.

A smile crawls to the latter's face.

"Dinner should be done in about an hour and a half" the shortstop adds.

"The bathroom is far back of the cabins behind here"

Sawamura nods at the information being told to him. He let's it sink in for future reference since he knew he would most likely spend his time outside after a few rounds to apply some of his Nagano lifestyle so he wouldn't feel homesick.

Once the two left (after coaxing Masuko into giving in) Sawamura was left alone in the room.

He felt a bit unsure whether he should play Kuramochi's games, but he tries to not give it much thought since he offered.

The first year plops down in front of the television, spending the next few minutes to pick a game and insert it into the system. It was all new to him since he didn't have one of his own, but he wasn't slow so it didn't take as long.

Just when the game finishes loading, his cell rings, indicating he got a call. Sawamura crawls over to his bag and digs his phone out. He wasn't suprised when he saw it was Mei calling.

"Hello, Narumiya" Sawamura spoke first while setting himself up to begin playing the fighting game he inserted.

Statics sounded for a few seconds till a tired Mei finally came to earshot. "Hello, baby! Do you have time to face time? You know...if you aren't working" His voice drifts for a moment but it's full of
Sawamura grabs at his phone and changes the screen so Mei's pale face came to play. "Nah, I got time"

Narumiya evilly grins, his blue eyes squinting. "There's my handsome best friend"

Sawamura glares at him provoking a pig-like snort from his friend. "Aren't you going to say anything back?" He chuckles, cuffing a hand over his mouth.

"And boost your egocentric self-image? No thanks" Sawamura laughs as he positions his phone against the nightstand so that his best friend could see him better.

From glancing at the screen he could see Mei comfortably laying in his bed of his dorm at Inashiro, dressed in a skin tight black tee and joggers from what Sawamura could decipher. His hair was disgruntled and bags hung under his eyes. He seemed to be preoccupied with something on the side.

"What are you doing?" Sawamura asked his blonde friend after his stifling laughter died down.

Narumiya pulls at something, showing his laptop in view for Sawamura to see. Equations and numbers all came to sight. "Homework" he groans with despair as he thrust a hand through his messy hair, setting his laptop back down.

"And it is...?"

"Math...wanna help!?"

"Absolutely not"

Narumiya whines. "But it's hard!" Sawamura laughs at his frustration, finding amusement when his friend suffers. "Your hard" the brunette chuckles, before blinking back at what he said. Narumiya's jaw slacks, and his head jerks over to his phone so that Sawamura could see his expression.

He wiggles a brow at him. "Oh you bet I am" the two bursted out into laughter.

"I meant to deal with!" Sawamura's face flushed red with embarrassment. He couldn't believe he actually said that to his friend. But he knew at this age and time everything he says is taken out of context the wrong way.

Narumiya snorts with a content facade. "Whatever you say" the two falls silent for a while afterwards.

Mei was more focused on completing his work while Sawamura played the game. At first, Narumiya didn't hear the little fits of anger and rage emitting from the other line, that was...until Sawamura cursed.

"Honeeeeey, you okay?" Narumiya sing songs while trying to softly hide his snickers as he nonchalantly shifts his gaze from his computer screen to his phone. His voice gentle and high-pitched like some housewife.

Sawamura drops the controller and lets out a sigh that was caught in his chest for a while. "No hon, I am playing this game and I can't seem to win"

"A game?" Narumiya hums in understanding. Though he doesn't really play video games on a daily basis so that sets aside his contradictory. Sawamura replies with a short-lived whine that thrums into
the blonde's ears.

Sawamura places his arms back to rest, staring up at the scoreboard of a losing streak of three so far. His eye twitches.

"I've been meaning to ask, where are you exactly? That's not your room" Narumiya asked, his eyes still glued to his computer screen before shifting to the paper before him and begins to jolt down his work.

Despite it taking a while, Narumiya really did pay attention to his best friends settings.

Sweat drenches at the brunette's temples. "I'm at a training camp, for Seidou's baseball team"

"Seidou?"

Now he had grabbed his friend's full attention. This was certainly news to him. He gapes at his secluded friend. Narumiya had no memory of his friend mentioning he knew the baseball team he was up against. Matter of fact, nothing about even being interested in the school's team or the sport himself.

If he could recall from their elementary years, Sawamura did nothing with sports. And now he is hanging out with the team he was competing against?

Even if he was to play, Narumiya knew damn well Sawamura had no choice but to back out. He wasn't in good condition to participate.

"A-Are you playing?" Narumiya was a bit anxious when asking. He swallows back on a lump caught in his throat; his body shook, overwhelmed of the fact that Sawamura could get himself hurt.

But instead of an answer out of reach, Sawamura replies, "Psh, no. I take their pictures for yearbook"

Immediate relief courses throughout Narumiya's body. "Not gonna lie, I almost pissed my pants. Are they treating you right?"

The brunette nods with ecstacy. He begun talking about how cool and nice everyone was and how they liked the posters he made for them earlier that morning. Sawamura even mentions what they would be doing in the training camp, which would be useless information if Narumiya tried to use the knowledge against him.

It made Mei quite thrilled that his young friend was having fun with them. Though it could of been better if he attended Inashiro, that's what Mei thought.

"Glad to see you having fun" Narumiya's voice recoils into Sawamura's ear. He had been stuck on a question for a while and couldn't seem to formulate any sort of idea to get to an answer. It wasn't like his notes were going to help much either. Sawamura makes a noise of buoyancy.

"It really is fun watching everyone work hard to win the tournament, and I hope they do beat you, Narumiya" Sawamura was full of optimism, though the image of Harada nearly breaks him.

The blonde arches a concerned brow. "You do realize I am the best pitcher in all of Japan right?" Narumiya boast with an egotistical smirk.

Sawamura rolls his eyes. That's how he always plans to win his arguments. "You're so full of yourself, like one player here I know" Sawamura narrows his eyes.
Narumiya peeks at his phone, leaning on the palm of his hand as he answers, "You mean Kazuya?"

Sawamura's eyes widen. "Y-You know Miyuki...?"

Narumiya shakes his head with a small smile. Sawamura felt like his body stopped functioning. He couldn't believe he actually knew Miyuki. How long have they known each other bemuses the brunette.

"Yeah! He went to elementary with both of us when we were younger than the two of us went to junior high together. We both played baseball" Narumiya spoke with tranquility.

When the hell was this? Sawamura thought as he stared back at Mei. He had no memory of his best friend ever mentioning the name Miyuki in past events.

It was strange. This was strange. His best friend knew his arch enemy? Were they friends? Best friends and bonded stronger than he and Mei did?

Sawamura chews back on his lips. He didn't know Narumiya associated with Miyuki and were friends. He didn't know how to react at first, but he knew not to be mad at Mei for not hating Miyuki as much as he did since he didn't know what went down during their childhood years either.

The only thing he knew than anyone else aside from Wakana and his own parents was that he had asthma. It was the one advantage he had over Miyuki.

But did Miyuki know he was friends with Mei?

Sawamura opens his mouth to reply but was cut short when Narumiya interjects with, "We don't talk anymore but on the rare occasion that we do see each other at a stadium or in between games, we converse"

The brunette only shakes his head. "O-Of course...Miyuki is...okay" Sawamura averts his eyes to the television screen. He begins playing the game again.

Narumiya sniggers softly. "Expected. But did you let them know about your...condition?" Sawamura is stiff when he shakes his head no.

"Why not, honey?" Narumiya says darkly. It didn't take Sawamura long to find out he had put away his work to talk with him for the remainder of the night. He is laying sideways on his bed so that he could only see his upper body.

"Because what's the point of letting them know? As soon as this year is over and I completed their spread for their yearbook, they won't even remember my name" Sawamura pauses the game before it even starts and lays the controller down.

Wrenching his legs closer to his chest, Sawamura throws his arms around his compacted legs for warmth. Then, slowly sways his body back and fro.

Narumiya still smiles even though his friend was being pessimistic about the future. "Is that what you think?" The blonde raises a perfectly arched brow. He clicks his tongue against his teeth, reverberating his jaw with a melodic hum.

"I know so"

Mei opens his mouth to speak, but he seals his lips when the door to the dorm opens. He turns over in his bed, and Sawamura watches as a dark-skinned male enters with brown hair slicked back, no
shirt on, but gym pants.

Sawamura felt like his body was being dipped in a volcano. Instinctively, the first year covers his eyes. But it was too late. The image was stuck in his head.

"Oh, hey, Carlos" Narumiya grumbles a warm greeting to his half-naked friend. The guy smirks at the southpaw pitcher, waving to him before jumping beside him in his bed after discarding his clothes in a bin.

"Who you on the phone with?" His voice is husky but alluring at the same time.

Sawamura slowly uncovers his face so he didn't come off as being rude. "It's Sawamura, the friend I tell you about. He is a photographer for Seidou's baseball team"

A satisfied "ooh?" could be heard from the center fielder. He squishes in the frame so that both of their faces fit on the camera. When Carlos gives an amiable but seductive 'hi', Sawamura meekly waves.

"Aren't you cute. Do you come to our games? Mei, does he come?" The so called Carlos guy interrogates in a curious manner. Sawamura blushes at the mounts of questions he was asking about him.

Mei narrows his eyes at him. "No, he doesn't. He has other important things to do" the blonde pushes him aside, though a hint of melancholy could be decrypted from his tone. "I'm sure he can make time for us, hey, Sawamura, how about coming to one of our games in the near future?"

Sawamura felt flustered at the invite. "U-Um, sure" he grins while stuffing his hand into his thighs, ignoring Mei's rants to not.

"No, Sawamura you really don't have to come if you are busy" Mei grits his teeth so he understood what he meant.

A small smile comes across the brunette's lips. "I'll come, I want to see what I have been missing. Aren't you guys suppose to be the best?" Carlos cockily hoots, shaking Mei with excitement. This makes the pitcher smirk as well.

"You're right, I'll make you see what you've been missing" Narumiya chortles while high-fiving Carlos who was just as excited.

Sawamura fixes his posture so that he is sitting with his legs up and arms folded over his kneecaps. His muscles ease up at the new pose.

Carlos winks at him. "See you then! Shirakawa and I were just about to go head out and eat, wanna come Mei?"

Narumiya boisterously yawns to emphasize his tiredness. "Sure, whatever" he spins over on his bed. "Check on you later, honey, be safe with those try-hards" he snickers.

Carlos raises a brow. "Is that what you guys do? Then bye, honey" Carlos waves with a seductive glare.

Now it's Mei's turn to give him that look. "Don't be coming on to my friend now! Bye, Sawamura!" He hangs up before anything else was exchanged.

Sawamura blushed at his little nickname that has stook with him ever since elementary. It was
embarrassing but mostly he doesn't mind it. Having Carlos call him it was a bit weird but it wasn't much of a bother.

He turns his phone off, then continues on with the game until the door opens a solid fifteen minutes later with a sweaty Kuramochi and Masuko entering.

"Oi, Sawamura, dinner is ready. Masuko and I are going to take showers so you can go on without us" Kuramochi mentions when he sits beside the brunette during his little battle with the boss of the first wave he finally managed to make it to.

He pauses the game when Sawamura realizes he wasn't going to win and did not want to suffer from his eighth consecutive loss in a row.

"Okay," Sawamura stands to his feet to stretch his aching legs. "See you two in a few" The brunette waves as he slips his feet into a pair of slides. The two bids his lease before he leaves.

It was darker than before. Like, he could barely see anything dark. Sawamura allows his eyes to adjust for a few seconds, watching as some of the players walked around for whatever purpose.

He whistles as the cool air blows against his skin. Sawamura shivers, licking at his dry lips to smooth out the texture.

Looking around, Sawamura had no idea where the cafeteria was. He phlegmatically begins to walk, feeling his hair fly about when the wind comes in contact.

Sawamura casually walks around to look for the cafeteria, catching one of the players exit a building carrying a plate of food. Must be it, He thought as he stalks his way to the door.

Meticulously entering the cafeteria the smell of freshly cooked rice and fried fish stings at Sawamura's nostrils. He could literally feel himself drooling. The place smelt good. Very good.

"Hey, Sawamura!" Takako greets the brunette as soon as he reaches the table where the food was being served.

She stood in the kitchen preparing the food while the other two second year managers made the rice balls.

They both also greeted Sawamura after handing him a tray. "It all looks so good! You make the food?!" He was baffled that the girls were extremely good cooks. It looked like he was having fine dining.

The girls were flustered. They always got 'Thank you's' and other indulging compliments but knowing this was the first years' first time trying the food was exhilarating, and if Takako had to admit, kind of nervewrecking.

Their cheeks turned a new shade of red. "Here you go, Sawamura! Hope you like it" Takako hands him a bowl of rice, and other small plates of food. They fit perfectly on the tray.

"Thanks you for cooking!" Sawamura bows, respectively, then grabs his tray and sits at a table beside the third years.

He wasn't sure if they prefer his friends over him so he wanted to give them their personal space.

He says his grace, then begins to eat his food. It tasted like absolute heaven.
Sawamura's stomach could agree as well given the little rumble of satisfaction. While eating, Sawamura mindlessly begins listening to the third years conversation since his source of entertainment was in his cabin.

They were talking about the Fall Tournament and what teams they expect to be more troublesome. It came to no surprise when they started to talking about past games and their skills.

Overall, they seem to be optimistic about this years tournament given their dexterous batting line up and adept fielders. Sawamura saw no need to worry since every member brought a special attribute to the team.

"Apologizing isn't going to make up for the years we've lost" Sawamura's eyes dilate when the statement the blonde told him in the library recites in his head. He didn't know why he was suddenly thinking about what he said, it just came.

Sawamura frowns. He really didn't want to think about them at the moment. But the guilt mixing in his stomach said otherwise. He felt bad for them. They seemed like good players as well, so why should they suffer?

The food he chews on was hard to swallow. It didn't want to go down and it had a sickening taste all of a sudden. He didn't want to throw it away, seeing as if he would of lied to the girls, but how could he finish when he was eating food of a player that was suppose to be in his very seat?

Sawamura slouches in his seat. He just couldn't wait to take a shower and wash all of this shame off.

"Don't you look down in the dumps?" Sawamura glances up from his food to see Miyuki standing over him with his tray in hand. He takes a seat beside him and begins eating his dinner.

"I-I do?" Sawamura blinks his eyes, staring at Miyuki through his lashes as Miyuki steals a look at him. It was a dumb question to ask but it didn't matter.

Miyuki shakes his head. "Anything you want to tell me?" Sawamura couldn't believe his ears. It almost sounded like Miyuki was from overseas. Was he actually offering to listen to him? Didn't sound like the Miyuki thing to do.

"Why would I tell you anything?" Sawamura frowns after swallowing back on his food. Miyuki stops midway from eating his rice.

"Oh? Is someone still mad about being tickled till their pants wet?" He pokes Sawamura in his arm kindling him to jerk his body back and slap his hand away. Light reflects over his glasses in an eerie way.

"You're the worst"

"That sounds familiar" Miyuki grins as he continues eating. Sawamura just watched him. He wondered how Miyuki could eat knowing people were staying up planning a way to steal his position; trying to watch him suffer as he did to them. How could he eat knowing people drip blood, sweat, and tears, while he practices as if all odds were in his favor?

He was obviously use to this. He's been doing this longer than anyone else and seem to have grown immune.

The same couldn't be said to Sawamura. He didn't know how to feel knowing that any one of those hundred players could spring up with new talent any day.
If he were in that spot, Sawamura would honestly be scared every day and night.

"Kuramochi treating you right?" Miyuki breaks Sawamura's train of thought with a caring look. The first year opens his mouth to answer, but was cut short when Miyuki continues, "Nothing getting between you two and porn?" Miyuki nudges Sawamura in the side.

Sawamura's cheeks painted red. "Kazuya! Thats was unnecessary!" The first year pushes the older male, eliciting a delighted laugh from the catcher.

"Oh? Back on first name basis I see" Miyuki continues to chuckle as he chows down on his food before he got attacked again.

Sawamura was still hot. Even though they already had this conversation he couldn't help but get hot and bothered when Miyuki brought it up like he actually had time to even do such nonsense.

"It's only fair I call you Eijun then" Miyuki smirks with pride as he moves on to his second bowl of rice. Sawamura glares at him.

"Y-You don't even call me Eijun, you call me-"

"Ei" Miyuki cuts him off, complacency tainting his face.

Sawamura inarticulately mutters. "Yeah...that" he rolls his eyes before they landed on his already half empty tray. His eyes widen. "When the hell he eat that? He only just gotten here-!"

"So then are we even?" Sawamura flickers his gaze up when he took into account of Miyuki looking down at him.

He arches a brow while stammering, "Not at all"

Miyuki grins to when his pearly white teeth came into display. "Stubborn, Ei, are we?" He sniggers as he stretches his arms out in front of him.

Subtly, he plays an arm around Sawamura's neck and leans in so his lips are a few inches away from his ears. Feeling his warm breath hit at his ear makes the hairs on Sawamura's neck erect. Heat crawls up his body, pooling in his stomach.

"I'm quite adamant about the things I want as well" he whispers as he tugs on Sawamura's cheeks. "If you know what I mean?" He slyly pulls away, then returns to eating his food as if he hadn't toyed with the first year.

Sawamura swallows what felt like the biggest lump ever mustered in his throat. It was hard to breathe all of a sudden. Why is he this type of person?

"I-I, I hope you die running laps" Sawamura snaps as he stares down at his food. "Tanuki-senpai" he sticks his tongue out.

Miyuki impishly smirks. "We'll see how long I can go" he stands up from his spot and grabs his now empty tray.

"I'll guarantee it's longer than Kuramochi" he whispers before scampering away so he wouldn't get hit.

It took a while to sink in and process but when it all finally did register he swore all of his organs melted inside of him with the amount of heat stirring inside of him at the moment.
 Feeling defeated, Sawamura slams his head on the desk, resting onto his arms.

"Geez," Sawamura turns over so that he is more comfortable; his eyes staring at the wall instead of the table. "He's an idiot"

"Keep moving or else everyone runs laps till the next morning!" The coach yells loud enough for his voice to echo throughout the field.

Sawamura looks up from the camera he was holding, smiling as he watches from the bleachers of the mounts of players jogging the field.

It was finally Wednesday, the start of the training camp, and things seemed to be going swell...at least for Sawamura.

He had been watching the guys run ever since he woken up around eight, and from what he heard they have been running since six. Needless to say, Sawamura was happy to be in the condition he is now then to be out there practicing. "What a good day to be alive" Sawamura grins with pleasure as the wind blew past by.

The Seidou hat he wore almost falls over, so he held firmly onto the cap to prevent it from doing so. He fixes the article correctly on him so the hat was facing the right way.

"Better" he hums to himself when the hat doesn't budge. When he hears his name get called his eyes voluntarily fell on one of the managers. Sawamura gently shoves his hands into his lap. "Yes?" He asked in a soft tone.

"Want a water bottle, Sawamura?" Yui asked from the back of the dugout where he could see her.

A genuine smile wraps onto his lips. "Please?" He hums melodically, enjoying the cool wind that kissed against his skin. Yui retreats to the ice coolers in the meantime to get the water.

Sawamura looks back at the field, where all the players had been jogging for the last two to three hours.

It was around nine in the morning and the whether was the exact opposite as it was treating them last night. The sun was scorching down on them and the wind was not friendly, hitting every player with collected dust and pebbles.

It was quite amusing to hear the waves of groans and remarks from everyone surfacing when they passed by. However, when the coach arrives (or they pass him) all comments seize.

It was quite comical actually.

"This is ridiculous", "absolute crap" Sawamura hides his smile with his hands when he spots Kuramochi and Miyuki in the back looking enervated like the others, probably even more.

One thing was certain though: maybe Miyuki was going to surpass Kuramochi in terms of mental strength.

When Miyuki's eyes shifted up, their eyes meet. A cunning smile traces his lips, and through the
sweat and dirt, he still remained looking somewhat decent.

_Somewhat._

"Here you go, Sawamura" the brunette looks down to see Yui holding out a water bottle to him. "Thank you so much, Yui" Sawamura heaves with delight as he takes the bottle and cracks it open.

"Anytime!" She beams, then heads back into the dugout with the other two managers.

Sawamura takes a long sip, the refreshing liquid cooling down his throat. It felt nice. He actually felt bad for the players that hadn't had anything to drink in a while. Did he feel bad? For some, but definitely not for a certain Tanuki.

It didn't help that the sun was burning down on them as well. He leans back in his seat, drinking the water while going through the pictures in his camera.

He thought he would spend the time wisely to go through which pictures he would imprint in the spread while the training was going on.

However, that got old pretty quickly.

What was he suppose to do for hours and hours outside while everyone else practiced?

"Hmm.." Sawamura sets his camera aside beside his water bottle and clasped his hands onto his lap.

He loved to play some of Kuramochi’s games or call Mei and see if he was free for from practice but he didn't want to seem like he was bored or anything. He felt like it was showing impudent behaviour towards the coach.

But it couldn't be helped. The managers seemed to have everything done on the side so the only thing left to do was to watch the guys run until one of them finally broke.

After a few minutes wasted Sawamura has had enough. He stands to his feet and hops off of the bleachers.

His jacket that he had brought thinking it would be cold was tied around his waist, showing his white shirt with the number 20 embroidered in bold print, and black gym shorts that he switched back on when he thought wearing jeans was a good idea.

Sawamura timidly enters the dugout that girls were in, soaking in the shade, and warmly greets them all while looking around. It didn't take long till his eyes fell on a row of bats and a crate of balls.

A smile stretches on his lips. "Hey, is anyone using these for the moment?" Sawamura asked as he pointed to the neglected objects sitting next to the benches.

The smaller manager raises from her seat. "Not for the moment, but if you are interested in playing I will love to join you" Sachiko, her name was, says with a benevolent smile.

The other two agrees. "We aren't doing anything for the time being so we know firsthand what true boredom is" Takako softly giggles as she picks up the crates.

"Mind getting the bats, Sawamura?" Yui asked close-eyed as she points to the racks hung up beside the benches.

"Of course!" Sawamura warm-heartedly takes four bats and walks out of the dugout after the girls.
As if on cue, they met Takashima Rei when they exit the dugout. She had returned from the kitchen along with coach who brought out coolers of more water.

"Good morning, is it okay if we use the equipment for a while?" Takako asked with a kind smile.

Rei shifts her glasses up the bridge of her nose. "Of course, today is only focusing on stamina so we won't be using them until later on tonight" she informs the group.

She turns to the coach for confirmation, who verifies the information with a shake of his head. In spite of him having his ever so stern look and black shades, he seemed to be in a good mood.

"The guys are running extra laps, I saw Jun and Masuko stop four minutes ago" Sawamura tensed up at the statement.

Scooting over so that the coach had a place to walk by, he watches as coach Kataoka begins to shout at the top of his lungs, threatening the players of an additional five laps since the two said players stopped.

The looks the guys gave both Jun and Masuko was hilarious. Sawamura couldn't hold in his laughter when he saw Miyuki's face. He looked like he was about to throw up.

It was Ryousuke's expression that killed him the most. His eyes twitched with the desire to kill.

Sawamura spits out in laughter. "Sucks to be them" he hums as the players recommenced their jogging. He looks between the coach, who still held an attentive demeanor. His face showed no sign of mercy.

Rei seemed opposed to the idea. "Do you have to overwork them, sir?" She tilts her head as she rests a hand on her hip. "They've been running for about two hours now" she finishes.

Without looking at her, the coach remarks with, "And? They are moving at least two hours each game"

She sighs with immediate defeat -not like she had much to argue with when going up against him- Rei turns over to face the girls, and Sawamura. "Have fun. Oh, and Sawamura if you need something to do, you can choose to help out and cook lunch for the team soon" she offers.

Sawamura raised a brow. He never thought about cooking, matter of fact, being in a kitchen. He didn't even know if he could cook. At his job back in Nagano he mainly takes the orders and cleans the tables. Even his mom doesn't want him in the kitchen.

"O-Oh, really, I can?" He stammers with surprise. Rei nods.

"Okay, i've always wanted to cook! I'll be chief Eijun, at your service!"

The managers gushed at his exuberant tone. "You're adorable, Sawamura" Yui pats his head.

Sawamura blushes. It wasn't a comment any guy in particular would ask for, but at least he knew he was decent looking.

"So, ready?" Sawamura looks up to see the girls already ahead. He tightens his grip on the bats.

"Yep!" He skips ahead with them. The small group heads into an isolated area away from the guys. Since they didn't want to disturb their practice they thought it would be nice to play away from them.

"Have you've ever played before? Baseball I mean" Takako asked when she sets the crate of
baseballs down. She takes a spot bending beside the crate, while Yui did the same on the right side of the crate.

Sawamura lays the three bats down, keeping one he would be using. His brows knit together in cogitation. "I don't think so" he answers trying to go back in time to when he actually held a bat.

He remembers Narumiya constantly nagging him to try out for baseball before his condition got serious, and even then, he would beg Sawamura to at least pick up a bat. But he can't remember doing so.

"Nope, never have in my life until now" Sawamura answers as he stares down at the golden colored bat. It was very clean.

He drags his hands over the surface. It was heavy in his grip. He didn't exactly know how to hold a bat but from watching Miyuki and the others it seem to come as second nature.

"We don't get much of the logistics either, but from what we can recall from the guys teaching us is quite simple" Takako gets up and walks over to fix his stance.

She gets behind him then places her hands on his forearms to better position them. Propping up his shoulders and pulling back on his dominant hand; kicking his feet out until they were shoulder-length, bending his legs and twisting his waist just a bit, Takako had managed to make his stance pop as best as it was suppose to.

"Does it feel good?"

Sawamura shifts a bit in place. "I feel uncomfortable" he murmurs.

Takako had already bent back down next to the crate. "Try swinging when I throw the ball to you, make sure you keep your eyes on the ball, okay?" Sawamura nods his head in understanding and does as he is told.

He bends his knees and hovers the bat over his shoulder instinctively. When the ball releases from her hand, Sawamura swings the bat. Unsure of where he should swing, he swung low, where the ball didn't even fly.

He sweatdrops. "It's okay, wanna go again? Try swinging higher"

Sawamura nods then readies up. He takes in a deep breath and tries to focus on the ball. He didn't know why this moment felt so real to him, like he was in a real game.

This time Sawamura does swing higher. Probably too high.

The girls eyes widen. "Try lifting your back feet, Sawamura. It should add power" Takako informs.

Sawamura chews on his bottom lip as the ball launches at him. Subconsciously focusing on lifting his feet and swinging high but not too high, he distracts himself and ends up spinning a whole 180. He blinks, discombobulated.

"Um...?"

By now Yui had stopped tossing to Sachiko who had long stopped batting. They just couldn't believe someone could be that bad at baseball. But Takako had only thrown three balls so even for a beginner they wouldn't hit one until the umpteenth time. Who knows.
"Kinda makes you happy he doesn't play for our school, huh?" Sachiko whispers to Yui after the twentieth ball was thrown. It was starting to get hard to watch.

The benevolent second year shoots the smaller girl a look, then nudges her in the side.

She winces. "You're right, he had no chance" she whimpers as she rubs at her side.

"He is trying" Yui says in a tender tone.

When another ball was thrown they watched as Sawamura swung at it. It seemed like he wasn't even trying even though they could tell he was giving it his all. It was almost sad.

"This is frustrating" Sawamura grumbles when his bat literally made contact with the ground after he tried swinging for a ball that fell at his knees.

"It takes time Sawamura, after all no one is born with natural talent. Everyone needs practice every once in a while" Takako hums as she begins to collect the scattered balls.

Sawamura pitches in.

He begins to think back to the Seidou players practicing to the second stringers doing the same. Sawamura even remembers his last conversation with Mei, who ended up leaving to practice with his friends even though his boast about being the best in the country.

"I guess it doesn't" he thinks, referring to when Takako spoke about talent not coming naturally.

Sawamura looks up at the field after he dumps the balls he collected from the ground into the crate. He was watching as the guys one by one ran bases. Some fell from exhaustion but most of them pushed through.

They were going according to their batting lineup.

His brows furrowed when he watched as Masuko began to run, leaving Miyuki next up to run.

"Does that mean there was a point in Miyuki's life where he had to overwork his body to become that perfect?" He watches as Miyuki bolts off from home plate. As if his body had not been affected at all by the many laps he had previously run; Miyuki seemed to be running on air. It was as if this was nothing.

It wasn't just him either. Many of the other first stringers, like the third year trio, could move as if they haven't done anything all morning. And yet, despite how fast they were all moving their faces were drained and the color in their eyes faded.

They could almost pass off as zombies. It was quite sickening. "I can never run that long, my legs would give out" Sawamura tightens his grip on the bat the same time Miyuki slid for home plate.

He watches as Tetsu and Kuramochi pick him up with his available hands.

Miyuki is already drenched in sweat. His uniform is dirt ridden and his hair is messy. He seemed to be laughing about something Kuramochi said.

Miyuki then begins looking around, as if searching for someone. It wasn't until he turned around for a split second that he caught Sawamura and the girls. A cheeky smirk plays on his face when his eyes meet with the familiar golden orbs.

Sawamura felt his breath clog in his throat. Miyuki gives him a friendly wave, one that does not fit
his character at all. Sawamura's brows furrowed.

All he did was shake his head with rejection. "Go practice" he mouths and ignores the goofy faces Miyuki was making. "He is so aggravating"

Sawamura raises the bat over his shoulder. The stance really did feel uncomfortable. "Ready, again?" Takako had been waiting for some time now. However, she didn't sound nor look as impatient as he thought she would be.

Sawamura nods and as he readies himself he swears he could see Miyuki watching him; taunting him.

He tries not to give it much thought. But even as Takako ask if he was ready- and though he thought he was- Sawamura couldn't help but glance up to prove his theory.

Sure enough, Miyuki was staring at him with his hands on his hips as he waits for his turn to run bases again, eyes boring onto his very existence. Sawamura shivers, and tries to shake his image out of mind.

He turns around, and by then, he had totally forgotten what he was doing. The ball that came hurdling at him; he didn't know how to react to.

The ball softly hits at his arm, but it felt like he got stung by a bee. He even underswings as if it was going to do anything.

"Sawamura, are you okay?" Sawamura massages his fingers over the skin that had been inflicted on. He gently nods, and felt as if he had enough.

Swinging was already hard enough. He didn't even work out on a daily basis.

"I'm done, this is terrible" heat crawls up on his back from the constant heat radiating from the sun. His breath grew rigid and his arms ached.

"Aw, already? How about one more before we pack up" Takako insisted. Yui, who had been switched sides with Sachiko, shoots a kind smile at the first year. "It's your first time, don't stress it"

"Well it's also my last" Sawamura incoherently mutters as he scrutinizes the bat he was holding. It was beginning to feel slippery with his sweat riding along the surface.

A heavy sigh leaves his parted lips. "Fine" he willingly gives in.

The two simultaneously giggles. "Good!"

"Now, remember to lift your leg and tug with your waist. Watch the ball, and swing your arms with power" Takako recites as she takes out another ball from the crate.

Sawamura nods, shrugging off the useless knowledge he wouldn't need after the last swing.

He bends his leg and raises the bat over his shoulder, automatically. It was still the most uncomfortable position he has ever been in. He knew he was tense. He felt it in his shoulders. It was like the weight of the bat was dragging him down.

He rehearses what Takako says into his head, trying to cramp in everything she told him while the ball was being thrown to him.

He remembers that he has to twist his hips, to step his foot out for contact, and to put power behind
his swing.

In the moment the ball is released from her hand he tries to sink it all in. Tries to do it all at once.

Sawamura pulls his arms out, and everything. But he does it too hard. The ball swoops over the bat, barely grazing the metallic cover of the object.

His swing pulls over to his shoulder, and he lifts his feet to stop himself from flying, hoping he could dig his non-dominant leg in front of him for support. But the weight of his body shifts, and he spins.

Pain overtakes his right leg. He stumbles forward, and all the girls quickly runs over before he fell, catching him right before he could hit the ground.

"God, Sawamura!" Sachiko heaves heavily.

Yui let's out a shaky breath. "Are you okay?" Her bang slips down so he had a slight glimpse of her other eye.

Sawamura swallows hard. "I-I think so" the girls cautiously pull him so that he was standing. But that proved to be a bad mood because the first thing he felt was a shock of pain gnawing at his right leg. The flinch he manifest was quite noticeable.

Sawamura doesn't even try to play it off either. He knew he couldn't subtly shake off an injury. Not in front of the ones who actually treat some of the teams wounds.

"Is your leg okay?" Yui is the first to call it out, still carrying his arm over her neck for care.

Sawamura chews back on his bottom lip, suppressing the urge to let out a sob. "I don't think it's that serious. I guess some ice should do it"

Takako faintly smiles at the brunette. "Okay, I'll get you some ice. You can relax with us in the kitchen while we prepare lunch" she starts as she carefully pulls away from the first year.

The two other girls begin to pick up the equipment while Yui holds onto Sawamura. When they were done the group escorts themselves to the dugout, and sets the equipment down. "We are going to start cooking" The girls notify Rei, who was sitting on the bleachers talking to someone on her earbud. She pauses, smiles at them as if it was okay. "I'll come check on you guys in thirty minutes, call me if something goes wrong" then she continues on with her conversation with another scouter.

They make their way to the kitchen in the cafeteria building. The smell of freshly chopped wood stinging at their lungs. It's quiet when they walk in, and the sun shining through the windows appeals to the setting even more.

The kitchen isn't big but it isn't small either. There is a square like table in the center of the room with counters and tabletops encircling the area. The floors are a brick red, perfectly meshing with the mahogany colored walls that surrounds the flooring.

Sawamura seats himself at one of the stools, watching as the girls begin to take out food and packages from the refrigerator and cabinets and onto the square like table.

"Why do you guys cook so early? It's only a few minutes till eleven" Sawamura inquires as he catches the time on the oven. His eyes flicker over to Sachiko, who was sitting across from him, unpacking the food from it's placeholder. "Because" she hums, digging her nails at the flap of the bag to detangle the corners. "There are many players on the first string" she finishes with an annoyed grunt at her nail chipping.
"Yeah, they all need to eat a certain amount of food so they can regain all of the energy they lost" Yui says from the kitchen sink, washing dishes that they used the previous day.

Sawamura frowns. "A certain amount?" He repeats as he rests his chin onto the palm of his hand.

"Yep" She trails, too occupied with cleaning a spec off of a specific corner of a plate to focus on talking. "Every player is required to eat a plate of fried fish, three bowls of rice, and some fruits" Takako tells as she grabs a zip lock bag from one of the roll out cabinets. She fills the bag with ice from the freezer then wraps it whole with a paper towel and places the cool compressor on Sawamura's ankle after elevating his leg on the stool.

Sawamura mutters a soft, "Thank you" repositioning the bag on his ankle.

It was all starting to make sense now. Looking back to last night when he and Miyuki was eating dinner together, he takes into account how fast Miyuki could eat. Even though they did a light practice that evening he still ate so much. Maybe he was use to it, he tells himself.

He vibrates his jaw, then drums his fingers along his leg. The injury didn't hurt as much since he was use to getting twisted ankles-on the not-so-rare occasion that he is beaten- so this didn't really matter. Wasn't much of a bother as it was when he first experienced it.

'Are you crazy?! Why didn't you call me?' Wakana's voice rung throughout his eardrums. He had totally forgotten to text her about his arrival at the camp and gotten hurt. He was going to have it both ways when he called her.

If he had to be honest, he was scared of angry Wakana. It wasn't the best side of her he enjoyed.

He melts in his seat.

The thought of her yelling at him with worry, threatening to come up and beat up anyone that she assumes hurt him scares him half to death. Even if his injury was a mishap she would find a way to misinterpret it like how she overreacts to everything.

Sawamura wasn't ready.

He thrust a hand through his hair. It shouldn't be that bad, right? This stuff usually last for about a good five days so he was fine....right...?

He didn't know, it varies.

"Hey, I'll help out with something if you guys need it" Sawamura spoke as he twisted at the loose strand of hair dangling over his right eyebrow.

Everything mostly seemed to be handled, but it didn't hurt to ask. "Oh thank GOD, Yes!" Sachiko places a bucket next to Sawamura on the table; he jumps from the sudden noise.

It smelt bad.

But it was a familiar smell so he didn't comment about it. "Do you mind cutting up the fish? Neither of us can really stomach the smell" She grimaces, her face contorted from the smell. Her stomach churns with dissatisfaction.

That didn't sound hard. He was use to cutting up the fish back at home in Nagano so this was nothing. His mom and Wakana always pushed the deed upon him or his grandpa, but it was mostly him doing so. If anything, fishing was the best thing he was good at.
"Okay," Sawamura says nonchalantly as he grab at the knife she was holding out to him.

Sachiko seemed a bit pale and Sawamura couldn't tell if it was the smell of the fish or the thought of seeing them cut up. "Y-You do know how to cut fish, right?" Sachiko swallows back on what she could hold down.

She seemed to be mustering all of her willpower to not regurgitate. Sawamura just smiles at this.

"Yeah" he answers as he places the cutting board she slid across the table in front of him. He pulls out a fish from the bucket after cleaning his hands and calmly begins to cut open the fish. Skinning it and all.

It doesn't take him long to finish but it did have his fingers burning a bit.

"I commend you" Takako grins.

"Nice job" Yui is shocked as well. "How do you do it with such ease?"

Sawamura sadistically grins. "I just pretend it's Miyuki"

He cuts the head of a fish off, scaring the girls. Sawamura was cutting hard and violently, but significantly good at the same time.

"Is anyone else getting a creepy vibe from him?" Sachiko cocks her head at her best friend, who only smiles warmly at the situation.

She lays a hand on her head.

"Only you"

Chapter End Notes

Did you enjoy?? :D
Lost But Not Forgotten

Chapter Summary

Sawamura gets lost, but only one person remembers him.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is a bit longer than usual, which I didn't mind making. I actually enjoyed it :)

Please mind the errors...I previewed it so I feel like I did a decent job.

The training camp has only gotten worst from what Sawamura could see. Procedures took place during the forest and some practices involved the players carrying another player and hauling tires. It was quite excruciating to watch unfold. Some of the players had been vomiting after their legs given out at the mention of eating, while others fainted. By the third day, despite it being the last day, everyone was on edge. It was around late five in the morning when Sawamura rolled over on his bed to the sounds of his roommates dressing.

"This is going to be hell" he hears Kuramochi mutter with dread as he slipped on his uniform shirt. Sawamura cuddles into his blanket, not fancying the cold air that came unwelcomed into their cabin.

He watched as Masuko and Kuramochi lazily got ready, almost toppling over from exhaustion. "My legs feel like noodles" Kuramochi whines after managing to slip into his pants and applying his socks on. Sawamura lays up in his bed, barricading his body with the blankets. "It's the third day though, why do you guys look more dead than yesterday? shouldn't you be happy?" Sawamura spoke in a whisper even though they were the only ones sharing a cabin. His voice was soft and cluttered due to him shivering.

Kuramochi drops his arms after stretching, glancing back at Sawamura with a weary look. "The third day is the worst..." The brunette's eyebrows rose. That sounded like a thing the coach would administer, having the last day be the most painful that is.

He wouldn't care if the world was ending, he'd make sure you perfect overrunning first before bracing yourself last while he watched from a camera, locked in his basement.

Masuko grumbles, and it wasn't his stomach. He was one of the few people who had to push through eating after the afternoon practice yesterday. Sawamura actually felt bad for him. He seemed to be in a lot of pain, and not much support could be given to him since everyone just wanted the practice to be over or if they stopped they knew it would be over from there.

"Why is that?" Sawamura knew it was a bit dumb of him to ask. But he was curious. What made the third day way worse than the others?
After Kuramochi ties the laces to his cletes, he straightens himself while wincing from the stinging pain of his stiff joints. "Everyone is tired by the third day...which means more mistakes" Masuko says in a highly agitated tone, his hypocrisy high and mighty with him being right in that category of people who makes the mistakes.

Kuramochi clicks his tongue. "The practices are longer and more agonizing to endure" he sighs heavily. The shortstops face is already pale. Hell, he seemed deprived even though he got a whole six to seven hour rest.

"Everyone is passive aggressive at this stage as well" Masuko reminds Kuramochi with a tap on his shoulder, referring to last training camp when things went wrong. Kuramochi shivers at the thought. "Yeah, during Summer's training camp when we were on the last sequence, Sakai had stopped jogging because he started cramping."

"Ready to quit" Masuko interrupts.

Kuramochi glares at him before returning to the anxious look facading on his kouhai's face. He drapes his arms over his chest.

"Ryou-san didn't make him eat anything for three days because it costed us another ten sprints" Kuramochi tells as he scratches at his temple at the thought. Sawamura felt his stomach flop. Even though he hasn't been training with them, just watching them was painful enough. He didn't think he could handle sprints after a three day workout.

Masuko yawns. "Well we better get going, last time we were late the coach made do three sets of fifty push ups" Kuramochi suggested then diverts his gaze to Sawamura. "Free to watch if you want"

The two then leaves, jogging out once they made contact with the outside. Sawamura raised a brow.

His leg still hurt from doing a fast ass 180 degree spin, but he guess it didn't hurt to simply go and watch.

Nope.

He lied.

Sawamura was tired and didn't feel like getting up knowing he was going to have to put in extra effort if he wasn't planning on hurting his leg more. He lays back down in his bed and curls up into his blanket for warmth. He blocks any access for the cold to seep in, melting into his bed when the shared warmth enveloping him drags him into another hazy dream. The cold was even more reason to stay in.

In an instant, everything goes black and his weight drops into an all time low. Sawamura was taking his precious time. He wasn't the one terminally suffering from sleep deprivation after all so he could care less what time he woke up.

Sawamura doesn't sleep for long though, or so he presumed. His eyes groggily open when the sound of his phone vibrating beneath his pillow sounds. He groans, vision slurring from blur and head pounding with some sort of pain he couldn't even fathom at the moment.

Sawamura yawns as he stretches his arms out, allowing the exhaustion to seep out of his muscles. He rolls over in his bed to face away from the stinging light lurking in the windows, also, away from the phone.

Forgetting about his injured leg, Sawamura shoots up howling in agony. "Dammit" he grunts in
intense pain as he spins back over on his back to recap why he even turned that direction.

Turning on his left this time, Sawamura slides his phone from under his pillow and turns it on. Immediately, he regrets his decision the second the light flashes in his face. Sawamura squints his eyes as he makes out the message tab he had received from Wakana. Sawamura lets out an inhumane groan as he goes and calls her.

It was around two in the afternoon. How the hell did he let that happen? Sawamura was confused himself, he hates sleeping in knowing he could be doing other things. But he is thankful some time passed.

He was sure Wakana was definitely up right now. "Eijun! How are you?" Wakana's voice bolts him out of the quick daydream he was in. Her voice is high-pitched with excitement; he could hear it.

"I'm fine..." Sawamura faintly mutters as he snuggles back between his blanket and the warm comforter. He adds another pillow onto the one he has been using to better bolster his head. "Today is the last day of the training camp, we are returning tomorrow morning" Sawamura appraises. It came as expected when Wakana sighs with relief.

"Thank god! It's weird not having you here at work being criticized by your mom" She snigger with underlying sinister. Truth be told Wakana enjoyed hearing his mom argue with Sawamura about a table not being properly cleaned or an area needing to be swept. Sawamura knew she took enjoyment out of it, which was why he got his revenge by pouring a market of flour on her one day after one of their routinely arguments. Even though he slipped afterwards and had to deal with a laughing, red faced Wakana, that was besides the point.

Sawamura couldn't help but laugh at the reminiscent memory. That was quite the day for them, even though they were both punished with cleaning the entire kitchen. "Whatever, she probably misses me as well" Sawamura depraves into laughter.

A noise of objection ridges through the line. Sawamura raises a questionable brow, his body unmoving as he succumbs to the warmth of his bed. He didn't see himself moving anytime soon. "What's that suppose to mean?" Sawamura snaps with a smile breaking onto his face shortly after. Wakana, who had been stifling her laughter, wheezes through her words. "She's actually never been better, she says" Wakana is cracking down at the jokes his family had come up with. Sawamura could imagine her in her bed, stuffing her face in a pillow while laying on her back kicking her legs around in laughter. Geez what a good friend she was.

"If you were gone any longer they would of rented your room out, your grandpa says," she giggles between her hand, he visions.

Sawamura rolls his eyes, knowing they were only joking. Or so he thought. "Well it's good to see you and the others are doing okay. I will call you back shortly after, I wanna watch the practice" he enlightens as he takes another glance at the clock. It was now a few minutes till two. They had been talking for a brief moment now.

"Okay, have fun and be safe" he hears Wakana's voice thrum with worry but also with delight. The thought of seeing her childhood friend after three long days was overexhilarating. Soon after, the two hangs up. Sawamura burries his phone back under his pillow and lays there for a while. He honestly didn't feel like getting up, but he didn't know what he was going to do all waiting either.

Sawamura lays up in his spot and meticulously drags his legs over so that he is careful to not hurt himself again. As he stands to his feet he is careful to not apply any unnecessary pressure to his right leg. Grunting, Sawamura leisurely shuffles to his bag and begins to change out of his nightwear.
He drops his shirt after stripping the article off of him, then practically wiggled himself free of his pants when it came to not hurting himself. The process was effective and fast. Like stated, Sawamura has had many sprained ankles before, so he knew what to do by now to change.

After he is left in nothing but his briefs, Sawamura brings his bag onto his bed and rummages through for any clothes he hasn’t worn yet. Today was mostly cool even with the sun out, so Sawamura decides to wear his khakis shorts, a green tee under his black sweater, and some sneakers. He’s learned to walk without complaining about his ankle so putting a shoe on didn’t much do anything.

Once he is done, not much caring about his hair, he goes to the washroom to brush his teeth and wash his face before heading over to the baseball field. He cogitates about what kind of extreme practices the guys must be going through. Sawamura was kind of apprehensive when it came down to seeing what they really did to hate the third day. He half expects to see one group hunched over loistering by the coolers with damped towels fastened around their necks. Another group trying not to faint while on their last bit of breath and the last pack trying to pull themselves together but can’t find the fortitude to do so—is what Sawamura would of thought if Seidou was an average baseball team. And in this case, they were no where near the bottom.

He knew what to expect. Everyone closely compacted together sharing the same breathless hair as they practiced, their screaming lungs and contorted, drained faces cascading nothing but tiredness as they burned through every lap or procedure given to them.

Yeah, now that sounded more like Seidou.

He could get a could picture of them in their head. Sawamura could imagine the face Tetsu would make as he continues to harden his batting skills, Jun catching multiple balls that came close or not even on the field, the keystone combo continuously running, diving, and jumping for balls to perfect double plays, Tanba and Kawakami continuously pitching until they grasped the concept of their techniques, that bloody bastard of a Tanuki actually going a good job at catching far pitches authorized by the teammates whenever they threw to him in crazy directions.

And as he trudges over to the baseball field he is almost baffled to hear pure silence. No yelling...no chants...they can't be jogging again.

But that wasn't the case when he reached the gates. To his surprise the team were not to be found on the field as half expected. It wasn't all that shocking, many of the practices took place on hills and paths not far from here.

Sawamura looks around, humming in dread when he saw no one in particular that he saw. He really didn't feel like searching for them with his ankle eliciting pain with every step he took. And with the whether getting more colder as the day progresses he couldn't find it in him to stay out long. "Ugh," Sawamura groans, hugging himself when a flurry of win spurs by. He begins walking around the campsite in sight of anyone really, didn't matter who.

Sawamura sensibly begins to squaddle to not hurt himself. He is searching for them around the cabins, in the cabins, the washroom, and to and back from the bus. "Where the hell are they?" He asked aloud after stomping off, digging his nails at his sleeve as he begins heading back to the campsite after crossing the road.

It was awfully quiet around and Sawamura wasn't a big fan of suspension. Not to mention that he was getting that eerie feeling that something bad was impending, waiting for the perfect moment to strike out at him. He returns to the center of the campsite, the place as neglected as when he left it. He shivers at another wave of win brushing over him.
There were no signs of them going anywhere whatsoever, and even if they were relocating, they would have woken him up to tell him. Or at least someone might have.

To add more to his troubles, he was hungry. As he limps to the mess hall he could only hope that there was a plate of food left for him. He didn't care if it was lunch time, Sawamura was starting to crave breakfast. His growling stomach could only comprehend how much he wanted this.

Sawamura pulls open the door to the building, swinging it too fast that the wooden brack smashes against his swelled up foot, crunching up at his ankle. A sharp breath could be heard from the latter. He bends over in pain, pulling back from the door, as if it was a hazard, to catch his breath.

Still wincing (and unmoving for about two minutes) Sawamura finally straightens up and enters the treshold, lifting his foot up so that no further injury would be inflicted. He prances inside, closing the door behind him as he continues limping to the kitchen.

The place is deserted like other areas as guessed. It seemed like the players hadn't even been inside with how clean it was. Sawamura scurries inside the kitchen, watching his step as he enters the medium sized room.

The kitchen is tidy, as expected of the managers. He scoots over to the fridge, making sure to lay his foot back so that he wouldn't get hurt again. Sawamura opens the door and surfs over the racks of packed food that sat array with one another. His eyes continue to ogle the racks until he got to the very bottom where a foiled up plate sat between a carton of eggs and milk.

Sawamura withdraws the plate, taking notice of the note taped to the top of it. 'For Eijun' he reads to himself quietly. No questions were asked. He knew he was the only Eijun around so no doubt it was for him. He takes the plate and closes the fridge and exits the kitchen.

He takes a seat at the first table he came across. Careful to not hurt himself once more, Sawamura bolsters his legs up so they laid on the bench then sets his plate down in front of him and starts to unveil the foil.

The brunette admires the food set in front of him, mostly because it didn't have to do with anything he would normally eat for breakfast. One section consisted of Furikake, and the other with Natto, with the traditional fermented beans sitting on top of the white rice. Seasoned fish sitting adjacent to the two separate dishes and a small portion of scramble eggs tainted with black pepper. In spite of the food being refrigerated, Sawamura could still smell the divine aura emitting from the food as if it was fresh out the oven.

Sawamura felt himself drooling. The food looked good. He even wondered if they served food as good as this on the last day if it was some sort of substitution for certificate of completio, congratulating the first stringers for making it through another training camp. Sawamura shrugs the thought away, he didn't much care as long as he got to eat. After saying grace, he takes the spoon in hand and begins eating.

Just as it seems, the food tasted delicious. It made Sawamura's tastebuds jump with greed. He continues eating, stuffing his mouth in delight.

Sawamura felt tingles spark in his mouth. This really was good. It was better than the last meals ever served to him during the duration of the three day camp.

He actually found it a bother that he ate too fast. It was too good he didn't have time to savor the food. "Compliments to the chief" Sawamura claps his hands as he stands from his spot and wobbles over to a trashcan and throws his now clean plate away. Grinning in content that he was now well
fed, Sawamura sets off to go find the others, his energy boosted from the meal.

As he leaves the cafeteria, Sawamura begins to make his way into the forest. He figured the guys were doing a workout that consisted of being in there since he watched them go through several occasions of doing so.

He thought it was a bad idea at first, but how bad could it be? They couldn't be that far off if they were taking the same route as yesterday.

Sawamura was actually engrossed in hiking up to the others. He did it a lot in Nagano with his mom and grandfather on the weekends so this was no different.

He was actually enjoying the scenery, one. The sun was shining through the trees, giving that picturesque setting from the movies. It was quite the sight for Sawamura. He begins to whistle a tune from the unknown, going along with what he could come up with as he moves along.

While doing this, Sawamura looks up at the trees flashing little rays of sunshine. He see's the birds nest and the squirrels running up and down the trees playing catch. He notices the caterpillar on a tree bark and a spider making home up above. In fact, Sawamura ignores that last little detail, anything with more than two legs that he saw made him go crazy. So he avoids looking up most of the time.

About a good thirty minutes pass by as he walks the trails. In that time frame nothing was heard from the team. He still didn't hear the monotonous clanking of balls spranging up, nor could he make out the shuffles of branches and leaves being crumbled beneath their feet.

But Sawamura doesn't mind it. He was sure he could find them in a nick of time if he continued with the same route as before. In essence, the brunette continues to hum the now familiar tune that rung in his ears and reverberates his jaw.

He steps over a log, then over a pothole after his already swelled up ankle almost barricaded into the darn thing. His face scrunches at the many scenarios that could have ended and only breathes heavily in relief.

He continues on with his little hiking trip, watching butterflies roam and all. Quite the place to calm yourself in.

But then another thirty minutes goes by unnoticed and Sawamura begins to wonder of the guys were actually out here. He was sure they took the same path he currently stood on but he didn't remember the trip being so long. It was getting colder as well, and maybe turning back didn't seem like such a bad idea. But he was optimistic, and marches forward.

It was a good minute when he hears what sounds like a rush of water wildly crying near.

Curious, Sawamura spots a huge river up ahead and stops. He had never seen it before during the procedures, so why was it there all of a sudden. He furrows his brows. 'Did I seriously just go the wrong way? So why was it that he was lead astray to a damn river?

The brunette stalks away from the river, moving into a whole new direction. "You've got to be kidding me" Sawamura grumbles as he climbs a small hill. He is careful to not hit his ankle but that didn't matter anymore when he slipped on a rock and was forced to not fall by digging his right leg into the ground for balance and clings to a dangling vine. His face contorts with pain.

Spitting out a small cry, he resets himself so that he is standing upright again. He wipes his hands at
his shorts when he notices the dirt stains and green mold. Not his cup of tea.

Limping, Sawamura begins to call out names, hoping someone was close by. "Mochi-senpai!, Masuko-senpai!" The first year calls out as he promenades up a more steeper hill. With an injured leg, high cliffs and hills were something to largely avoid, but Sawamura had hiked plenty of times to know how to perfectly grab onto a hill and climb it.

It didn't seem right though. He was getting higher and higher above the camp site. He wasn't even sure if the guys were up there. Now he really wished he just stayed in bed.

A loud groan escapes Sawamura's lips as he begins to painfully stroll through the forest. He was done with sightseeing now. He was lost and a bit scared if he had to admit. He has never been lost before.

If the coach decides to leave early than they would forget him. They would think he mixed in with the players and would leave him in the woods by himself. Sawamura eternally whines at the possible outcome.

"Am I seriously lost?" Sawamura says to himself as he walks over a tree stump. He regrets trying to find the team. They knew where they were but he didn't.

Sawamura had sat there for what felt like forever. The skies were turning a bluish-orange, which indicated that the evening was slowly arriving. The brunette wondered how long he had been out there because he was freezing his butt off. He shivers when another brush of wind passes by.

And he was starting to get hungry again. "God I wish I had food..." He whimpers closed eyed as he employs his arms as a pillar to rest his chin upon. He felt tired already from walking and wanted to take a break. But that break had been ongoing for a while now and he had to get up before the sky darkens.

It didn't make things better with bugs mindlessly hitting at his face and the constant rustling sound of squirrels and raccoons jumping out of bushes.

-wait, racoons?

Sawamura snaps his eyes back down to the vermin that had been staring daggers at him after pouncing out from behind a tree. He almost mistaken it for an oversized squirrel that he had to do a double take.

"Oh god, I don't want rabies" Sawamura's lips quivered as he lurches up from the stump and hides behind the tree closest to him. He watches as the racoon intensively strides over, defensively peeking around the corner to find out what Sawamura was to him.

The first year quietly shrieks, trying to keep his voice low as the racoon circles around the tree. Sawamura circles around the tree as well, fearing to move because in terms of speed as of now that overweight rat could step all over him.

Looking around, Sawamura bends down and grabs a rock and as he circles the tree, throws it over into the bushes hoping to run the thing away.

Haha-no. The racoon continued following Sawamura.

"Haha just kidding" Sawamura sarcastically mutters as he continues hobbling around the tree. It was getting tiresome. The first year wanted to run away, hoping he would get somewhere.
"O-Okay, I am going to run in 3...2...1...-"

Sawamura froze when he heard a hiss. A sound that did not come from the racoon.

He wasn't curious at all. Instead of checking what was below, snake-ing it's way around Sawamura's feet, the brunette bolts, and runs in a direction away from both the racoon and snake.

Sawamura ignores the increasing, staggering pain his right leg was excessively recieving. But that didn't mean he was stopping.

The brunette was too busy running between trees and climbing down little hills that he doesn't see what is in front of him. He bumps into something hard and feels himself topple over. He was rolling in dirt; falling for his dear life. Sawamura thought it was never going to stop, until it did, and he can only let out a grunt because everything all over hurts.

Sawamura winces at the pain he was recieving from all over, checking his body to a family of scabs and cuts. He grimaces at the sight, then on que, he feels a stinging sensation piercing at his lungs. His eyes dilated. He needed his inhaler.

Crawling over on all fours, Sawamura begins coughing for air, trying to appease his screaming lungs. He takes steady breathes, and although he is mentally panicking he knew not to do so. It would only use up more of his oxygen.

"Sawamura!" The brunette jerks his head up in surprise but also in pure joy when he heard the voice of his roommate. "K-Kuramochi-senpai!" He stares at the shortstop, who was covered in dirty and leaves. He frowns, "are you okay?" He crawls over, husking a voice that would make him less worried about him.

Kuramochi lays up from the ground and takes in the first years body after examinging his own. "I'm fine, what the hell happened to you?"

Sawamura felt ashamed. He sounded very worried even though they hardly knew each other. "I-I got lost...I was trying to look for you guys" he says, as he watches Kuramochi wipe himself clean.

He seemed to be cursing himself out. Something about wishing he told him sooner. "W-What are you doing out here...? Aren't you suppose to be practicing?" Sawamura wheezed through his still screaming lungs. He massages at his ribs to rid of the feeling.

"When we came back to camp shortly after we were going to do some more drills in the field before having our annual camp fire tradition, but when I remembered about you and saw you weren't nowhere to be found I figured you think we went in here so I snuck away"

Sawamura smiled at the feeling of his senpai caring about him. It was a good feeling to have stir up in him now that he was aware someone came to his rescue.

Kuramochi thrust a hand into his hair. "Anyways, can you stand? We fell really far" he extends a hand to the first year. Sawamura takes notice of where they fell from, and shivers.

He takes Kuramochi's hand and slowly feels himself rise. "Thank you Kuramochi-senpai for-ah!!" Sawamura cries in pain when he exerts pressure onto his feet. He stumbles forward, falling into Kuramochi's chest. The shortstop steps back, swooping his arms over the brunette so they didn't fall again.

"Woah, Sawamura, are you okay!?!" Kuramochi helps him down so he isn't standing. He leans him against a tree and sits him down to better scrutinize his legs.
The brunette only whimpers as Kuramochi descends his fingers lower and lower down each of his legs. When his fingers come against a hard and lumpy area over his right ankle, Kuramochi takes one glance and cringes. Sawamura's leg was a swollen red color, a tinge of purple surfacing at the top. The fall must of worsened his injury.

Sawamura bends over in pain when Kuramochi glides his fingers over the surface again. The brunette jumps, "it hurts, kuramochi..." Sawamura sniffs in agony.

"Jesus, Sawamura" Kuramochi spews as he turns around and bends over in front of the first year. At first Sawamura was confused but he had no time to ask when Kuramochi says, "We won't get anywhere if you are walking, you would only weigh us down" Sawamura flinches at the last part.

Weigh down...

Sawamura furrows his brows. He didn't want to be anyone's burden. That was the last thing he needed.

"That's why I'll carry you" Sawamura makes a face at the ludicrous statement. "T-That's drivel! You can't carry me after all the practicing you've been doing, you'll fall over!" Sawamura protested.

Kuramochi spun his head around, sparing him a menacing glare. "Would you rather us sit here and wait until birds carry us over?"

Sawamura purses a lip. "I'm not a fan of your humor" he pouts as he casually throws his arms over the shortstop's neck.

Kuramochi leans forward so that it was easier for Sawamura to fall onto him, pushing him up then throwing his arms under Sawamura's thighs to better adjust him on his back. It didn't help that he was slightly taller and heavier than the shortstop. Kuramochi grunts at the first few steps, but he eventually warms up to the sensation since this was in fact one of their exercises.

Sawamura comfortably ties his arms around the second years neck, careful to not choke him. "T-Thanks...Kuramochi-senpai" the first year stammers sheepishly after several minutes gone by without a word being said. It was true that this was embarrassing, if someone caught them like this then it was over.

Kuramochi makes a noise of exception. "Just don't tell anyone about this", "of course not" Sawamura sneers. He valued his life too much to be wipe clean from existence by being in one of his famous choke holds. He's seen Masuko in one of them.

Kuramochi lifts Sawamura up after feeling him slip, accidentally rubbing his palm at the swollen area. He feels the first year tense up on him, trying everything in his willpower to not cry about it. Instead, a shaky breath emanates from the first year, the exhalation fanning against Kuramochi. He lays his head between the shortstop's neck to rest. "When we get to our cabin I will clean your wounds, then you go take a shower"

Sawamura nods his head. Though there was a slight problem with the plan. "U-Um, how do I shower in this condition?" It pained him to ask, hell, it was humiliating. It meant just what it meant!

Someone was going to have to help him while he showered so he didn't hurt himself any further. He had never gotten hurt this severely to need assistance with anything. But the way he was implying it put Kuramochi on the spot.

He feels Kuramochi shake with discomfort under him, and even his adams apple bobbed with
perplexity. He actually didn't anticipate what would happen if Sawamura was to be left alone in the washroom.

And since he was the only one that knew about his injury as of now and would also be cleaning his wounds, he might as well help him shower and change.

"I'll help you" Kuramochi mutters inaudibly, though Sawamura caught it well. Both of their faces were burning at the thought. Sawamura was more embarrassed though. He was the one who would actually be naked; but Kuramochi would be the one bathing him.

Sawamura snuggled his face into Kuramochi's neck deeper. "I just want to go home" the brunette wallows as he secures his legs around Kuramochi's waist. The latter pumps him up so that he wasn't slipping again, and continues on forward.

No words were spoken between the two. They just quietly went about, thinking about the impending situation that awaited for them once they reached the camp site.

Sawamura felt remorseful. He had dragged his roommate into his problem because he couldn't find them, and in the end only gotten lost and worsened his injury. Now the already devitalize and weary player was carrying him through the forest for god knows how much longer and had to patch his wounds before helping him bathe. Might as well call him the babysitter.

In actuality, Sawamura felt bad for putting him through a lot. He knew a simple 'thank-you' won't make up for the lost time he could of spent practicing. It made him even more worried that he might get yelled at when they return, all because he decided to go out and look for his in distress roommate.

To add on to his pain, they might even miss the campfire if they keep it up at this pace, not that he was complaining. Sawamura even wondered if they were going in the right direction, but he didn't want to pester Kuramochi and make him stress more.

When the cool air swings by, both of the two shivers. Kuramochi tries to not make it seem noticeable that he was cold so he continues walking. On the other hand, Sawamura's teeth was starting to chatter. That fall feeling was starting to lift up again. But somehow the first year being on Kuramochi was augmenting his body temperature.

"K-Kuramochi-senpai, why don't you just leave me and look for help?" Sawamura sparks a conversation after a solid ten minutes flew by without them talking.

The crunching of tree branches and leaves underneath the shortstops cletes could be heard through the interval of silence, scaring away whatever critters were out watching them.

Kuramochi regrips onto Sawamura when his hands become too clammy. "Because that's a dumb idea" he remarks heavily as he skips over a small stream of water. His breathe came out as brumes, another hint that it was starting to get cold. Sawamura briefly feels himself fly up from the jump, clutching into Kuramochi when he feels himself rock into his back.

"D-Dumb idea?" Sawamura repeats as he loosens his hold around Kuramochi, who nods along.

"You're cold and wounded. I'm not leaving you by yourself"

Sawamura felt his heart jump. "B-But wouldn't it be fa-

"Sawamura" Kuramochi cuts him off, implying the end of the conversation. There was no way to talk him out of it. Kuramochi knew that the second he left Sawamura and found the camp site he could be carrying him in instead of asking for help. It was pointless to negotiate with him now that
his mind was made up.

"S-Sorry" Sawamura felt his legs buckle. Even though he wasn't the one walking he was getting
tired of holding them up. He was sure that Kuramochi was getting tired as well the longer they
walked. They needed a break shortly. Or else Sawamura was going to suffer from a serious leg
cramp.

"Can we take a break? My legs hurt" Sawamura tries not to sounded like a bratty child but his legs
were killing him. He knew he needed medical attention but he needed a rest. They both did. And
with his breathing normalizing he might just get what he want.

Even Kuramochi didn't seem objected by the request. His legs were aching and his body was
growing heavy with the additional weight. He felt like he was going to faint if they didn't find the
camp soon.

A heavy groan escapes from his parted lips. "Yeah, let's do that" Kuramochi stops at a huge oak tree
parked beside a stump. Given the stumps texture made it appear easy to sit on, so Kuramochi turns
over and bends down so that Sawamura has easy access.

With scrupulous attention, Sawamura slithers down Kuramochi's back and onto the stump, doing no
damage to his ankle while the older male aligns beside him on the ground. Simultaneously, an
enfeeble sigh emits from the two. They slouch in their spot to begin catching their breath before the
next round started.

Sawamura wiggles his legs around so they don't fall asleep. He surveys the area to see if a sense of
familiarity came to him. Anything to give him clues that they were near the camp. Nothing.

"You didn't perhaps bring your phone out with you by any chance?" Kuramochi asked from beside
him. He was now standing and had been walking around so that he wouldn't cramp up either.

The shortstop looks at him with sense of hope but also with low expectancy. He didn't want to get
pessimistic if he found out he didn't bring his phone with him. The first year timidly nods his head,
saying a sharp no along with it. Kuramochi suppresses the urge to let out a frustrated groan. He
didn't want the first year to think they were lost by confidently heading the way he was sure he came
from. But the deeper he got the more unsure he became. "That fall really screwed me over"
Kuramochi mumbles as he examines his arm. It started to pang up when he was carrying Sawamura,
but that didn't matter. He probably thought he sprained it when he fell.

"Stay here, okay? I'm just going to see what's up this way" Kuramochi informs, and reluctantly
leaves after Sawamura shook his head. The shortstop was a bit unsure whether or not he should
leave the first year but he had to clarify that the direction they were going in was the right one.

Sawamura looks over at Kuramochi's retreating figure. He seemed to be moving fine despite almost
days of working out.

Frowning, Sawamura peeks over on his other side of him, taking in the sketchy view of the stockpile
of trees lounging around.

At first he thought it was him sitting in the sun for a while but when he suddenly felt an increasingly
burning sensation hovering over his chest he sharply respires back in place. He suddenly felt
suffocated for no reason, and tired even though he hadn't ran in a while. Sawamura was sure he kept
his breathing as stable as he should have, but now he was thinking that his lungs really needed the
medication.
Sawamura flinches in pain. His lungs felt like they were crunching up, limiting his breathing. He tries
to normalize his breathing and knew he had to tell Kuramochi. Even though he didn't like it he
needed to get to his inhaler or else he might end up in the hospital again. And he did not want to
experience that.

Coughing, Sawamura hauls himself up and looks over in the direction Kuramochi sauntered in.
Hugging at his waist, Sawamura starts to unevenly walk the uncharted path.

As much as he wanted to call out to Kuramochi, he knew he had to keep his oxygen as low as he
could until he was sure he could talk.

Sawamura's body was beginning to feel heavy. His eyes were groggily and his head was spinning
from the lack of air he was receiving.

When his eyes lazily fell on Kuramochi's retiring body his eyes lighten. He held his hand out, trying
his best to call him out. But no words escaped.

At first the shortstop didn't suspect anything to be wrong with him, but the second he stumbled over
Kuramochi sped over and places his hands on his shoulders so that his head bobbed onto his chest.

"What the hell are you doing u-"

"I can't breathe" Sawamura says quickly as he clings to Kuramochi's chest.

Kuramochi's brows risen. "What do you mean you can't breathe-, Sawamura do you have...asthma?"
The shortstop quickly figures. Sawamura's head bobs, unsure if he even answered.

His body shakes from the daze he was in. "I-I need my i-in-

"Okay, don't talk anymore" Kuramochi interjects edicts intently. "You're losing even more oxygen
doing that" He turns over and backs up till his back pressed up against Sawamura's leg. He raises his
legs, then hauls Sawamura over so that he fit perfectly onto his back.

Kuramochi was internally panicking. He needed to find the camp site in fast before Sawamura's
oxygen ran out. And there was no way in hell he was going to carry a dead teenager back with him
or leave him out here to rot.

"Fuck," Kuramochi grunts as he boost Sawamura up on him, withdrawing a hand from the
photographers thigh to his head to check his temperature. He was cold. Very cold.

The shortstop could hear him wheezing for air. His breath rigid and uneven. "Calm down,
Sawamura, I'm getting you to that campsite, okay?" Kuramochi assures as nonchalantly as he could.
The brunette slowly nods his head, no response formulating afterwards.

Adjusting the brunette on him a little more, Kuramochi takes off running. He tries not to run fast
enough to scare the first year, but quickly to make sure they were getting somewhere. Sawamura
clings to him tightly so that he didn't fall off.

Everything seemed to be a blur to Sawamura as Kuramochi ran. The trees that passed by could only
be seen as a green bedim. His head slopes down, and Sawamura could see the ground passing off as
the same.

Sawamura chokes up, scrunching his face in uneasiness as he resettles onto Kuramochi's back. He
was getting more heavier to the shortstop for some reason.
Oh god, Sawamura was losing conscious. "Stay awake, Sawamura" Kuramochi shouts over the side noises being made. A groan escapes Sawamura's throat, his breath hitting at Kuramochi's neck.

"I-I'm tired senpai..." Sawamura grumbles. Even his hold on Kuramochi was starting to losen.

Kuramochi snipes his hand up to catch Sawamura's hand from slipping off. The first year jerks his eyes open when he feels the shortstops warm hand wrap around his. Noticing he was slipping, Sawamura rewraps his arms around his neck.

"Hang on just a bit, okay? We should be near" Kuramochi alleges confidently. He hated that he had to lie to make sure Sawamura didn't worry but he needed him to be calm. He could feel the first year's stomach rapidly pumping up and down on his back, his body slipping, and his legs unravel. They needed to get back to the cabins right away.

When Kuramochi gazes up he comes to an abrupt stop at a two way path break. His eyes widen. 

"Are you serious?" The shortstop snarls as he looks between which path to take. They found themselves in a serious delimma.

Sawamura faintly wheezes as he looks between the paths as well. He felt all of his energy officially drain from his body. Kuramochi stumbles back, his legs staggering in depletion.

He regrips on Sawamura so he was higher than before, and swallows a lump building up in his throat. Just great.

The brunette emits an inhumane noise, as if he was on the verge of collapsing. "T-Take the path breaking low" Sawamura breathes out and digs his face into the crook of Kuramochi's neck. He was really warm.

Kuramochi tenses up at the answer. "A-Are you sure? What if we don't make it to the cam-"

Sawamura tightens himself around the shortstop. He knew if they didn't get there in time that it would end with him needing serious medical attention. But it was worth a shot wasn't it? They had a fifty percent chance of this working, and splitting up was not at all an option.

He shakes his head, and raises himself up so he wasn't slipping. Sawamura wobbles forward, slacking onto Kuramochi's shoulder. He suddenly felt hot. His head was throbbing in pain and he felt like the blood from his legs evaporated.

Kuramochi knew he had to act. He takes the path skewing down and begins running as fast as he could. His heart was racing and his feet were moving faster than what his brain could handle.

The sound of Sawamura heavily breathing pounds in his ear. It pressured the shortstop into moving faster, feeling at any moment he would fall limp; lifeless on his body.

He ran in different directions, down and away and around certain trees. The cool air passing by only makes Sawamura bring himself closer for warmth. There was only so much brought between them. Kuramochi nearly slips. Sawamura bolts up to see Kuramochi standing still. He didn't know what happened but he had a feeling they were going to be out here longer than expected. Someone by now has to noticed their missing presence and called for help, otherwise they will be subjected to hyperthermia at any moment.

"Sawamura, we have to take another break" Kuramochi heaves as he begins to hobble down a narrow path. It hurt him to say this but they had to take another break. His legs felt like they were
about to cave from exhaustion and were aching from the cuts and small bruises he received earlier.

He knew he had to set an example for Sawamura as his senpai, but they had to stop. If he were to press on any further he would collapse and Sawamura would have to either limp his way to safety and call for help or Sawamura would have to wait until they rest up for a few.

It would all be fine. While they took a break Kuramochi thought of doing compressions on Sawamura to alleviate his breathing. He remembered his teacher telling the class of how to handle situations where someone couldn't breathe or was hyperventilating. But he didn't actually think he would utilize the skills.

Carefully, Kuramochi lays Sawamura onto the ground, cautious to not just throw his leg down. Sawamura didn't question what he was doing. He knew it was for the right reason.

Kuramochi straightens the brunette up so his airways weren't as constricted. "Take deep breaths, okay?" The shortstop tells him as he grabs at his sweater. It could of been restricting air flow to his lungs.

Sawamura rigidly nods, unmoving as Kuramochi undresses the sweater from him. Instantly, Sawamura shakes when the cool fall air makes contact with his skin.

The shortstop felt bad that he had to hold the brunette up to these circumstances. But he had to make sure he was properly breathing right for them to continue.

Fog vents from Sawamura's cold lips as he drops his head. His body was going numb.

Kuramochi notices his kouhai shaking, and picks him up to place him in the dim sunlight that could only shine so bright. He finds an open area, surprisingly where a bench was located. How convenient.

He settles Sawamura onto the bench, and watches as relief resonates on his skin. Kuramochi sits beside him and turns him over so he had more access to the chest.

"I know you're cold, Sawamura, but you are going to have to not wear your sweater"

Sawamura only nods, slowly fading in and out of conscious. "Are you still taking deep breathes?" He asked as he places his hands onto Sawamura's chest. He flinches at the contact and is startled awake again. "U-Um...yeah" he nods and continues to deeply breathe.

Kuramochi could feel the tightness in his chest as his chest arises then lowers. He thumbs his fingers at the tight area, pressing further onto his chest, which managed to loosen the knot. Eventually, Sawamura's husky breathes turned into low even groans.

It was a phenomenal transition. "I'm tired...Kuramochi" Sawamura mutters as he leans forward. He gently falls on Kuramochi's chest, closing his eyes and winding into a motionless nap.

"But we still need to get you to the ca-"

Snoring.

Sawamura was already fast asleep.

Kuramochi stifles a small chuckle as he hunches in his spot. The heat raining down on them seem to have warmed them up. He lets Sawamura rest on him while he takes in the scenery in front of him. It was quite fitting in the moment.
The shortstop sighs. This was going to be a long evening. He was still trying to wonder how he was going to get Sawamura in the camp site unnoticed if the guys were either doing drills or taking a break. It all really did vary on which direction they come out from.

However, Sawamura's injuries were quite conspicuous. The only thing that stood out was his swollen leg. The scabs and other cuts made were going to have to be treated in secret so they weren't made a big deal of. He did know, in fact, that Sawamura was going to need crutches if he planned on getting anywhere in this timeframe.

Kuramochi peeks over at Sawamura and could only wince at how uncomfortable he was laying on him. He fixes his posture so that he is laying on his lap.

It was a bit uneasy at first but it grew to not be as uncomfortable as he had hoped.

Eventually he would have to get up so that he could carry Sawamura back to the camp site, wherever that may be. But right now he didn't even want to think about the painful trip. His arm hurts and he was in a lot of physical pain.

He wraps a hand over Sawamura so the first year doesn't fall over, and even himself begins to fall victim to his tired being. Kuramochi closes his eyes, then slunches over so he was more comfortable. Sleeping like this sucked, but he might as well put in some minutes if Sawamura was going to sleep as well. "I'll wake up in fifteen minutes..." He tells himself before losing consciousness.

Two hours passed.

When a twig snapped from a tree up above and fell onto Kuramochi's head and down his lap, his eyes sprung open. His head aches when he pulls himself up, and looks around to find himself still lost in the forest on the bench he and Sawamura stopped by to rest. Only this time it was dark.

The skies were a dark blue and the stars and moon was out.

The shortstop's body ached with intensity as he moves himself around. He stretches his arms, pulling at the joints and relieving his muscles. Everything on him hurts.

Then he looked down.

Sawamura was gone.

Kuramochi jumps up from his seat and calls out, "Sawamura!" Spinning a whole 360 in hopes of seeing his mutilated body limping out to present himself. But that doesn't happen and panic infiltrates his mind.

"Dammit," Kuramochi begins jogging around the area, hoping Sawamura hadn't gone far from now. He couldn't have. He was injured. "What was he thinking? Why didn't he just wake me up?"
Kuramochi rambles as he continues shouting the first years name.

Why was he even up during the dark where things got two times as dangerous as morning. He didn't care about his reasons for leaving, it was the fact that he didn't wake him up when he woke to carry him back. He didn't know what type of danger he could get into with a hurt leg. "I'm so damn irresponsible, why didn't I feel him get off me!?" He reprimands himself as he runs a stressed hand down his hair.
He would be lucky if he could find Sawamura and make it to the camp site in hopefully less than an hour so they weren't eaten alive by wolves.

He was just mad at himself. He is a light sleeper and hears everything going on around him, so why is it that when Sawamura leaves, he doesn't feel that? It pissed him off.

"Kuramochi-senpai!" Kuramochi jerks back to see the awaken and now energized male hoping over to him with content. It seemed like he wasn't affected at all by the days travesty. The shortstop's brows furrowed with anger as he glared at his kouhai.

It felt like his heart dropped to his stomach and his ramming heart was about to break free of his chest. "Fucking hell, where were you?" Kuramochi marches up to the first year and protectively grabs his wrist. He begins to look around him for any more wounds he should be concerned about.

Sawamura shoots him an apologetic look. His cheeks turned a bright red. He thought he would only be gone for a few minutes and didn't even think he would be gone long enough to rise panic in his senpai. Contrition injects into his veins as he scratched at his knuckle in shame.

"I-I woke up before you did and decided to go see if I could find the campsite by myself" he enlightens his senpai with an enthralled smile. "And I did!" He tries to smile it off, hoping it pleased him enough to be happy.

But Kuramochi only frowns at his wreckless behavior. Although the news was reassuring he just couldn't believe he let him sleep while he walked around injured. Sawamura chews at his lips when he catches the look Kuramochi was giving him. It was making him squirm. He didn't want him to be mad.

Sawamura looks down in mere disappointment in himself.

"I'm sorry K-Kura-"

The shortstop tugs at his cheeks. "Baka, wake me up next time!" He hissed, as he let's go of him. A soft cry emanates from his lips, whining as he rubs at his cheeks. That really did hurt.

"Y-You looked like you really needed it" Sawamura stares down at his feet in guilt. He fiddles with his wrist while digging his feet into the dirt. The stare Kuramochi was giving him was putting him on the spot.

Kuramochi rolls his eyes. "At least let me carry you the rest of the way" he insisted as he stares down at his badly patched up ankle that was held in place by his sweater. Sawamura nods his head as he stumbles behind Kuramochi and jumps onto his back. "Okay" He grins as he entwines his hands around his neck. Even though he was suppose feel remorseful, the fact that he found the camp site was even more satisfying. He just wanted to go home.

"Tell me where to go, okay?"

"Mhm"

They begin to walk back to the camp fire with Sawamura leading. It took about fifteen to twenty minutes but they got there regardless. The guys weren't nowhere to be found so they scurried to their cabin and locked themselves in. Even if it was Masuko coming in they didn't want no one barging in while they were cleaning each others wounds.

Kuramochi sets Sawamura onto his bed. "I am going to get the first aid kit, okay?" He turns to leave but Sawamura stops him. "What if they catch you?" He was fill with so much anxiety.
During the three days they have been there, Sawamura has consoled many of the players and patched their wounds to know where the first aid kit laid. Worst of all, the managers might have the medical box and could get caught if he were to sneak in.

Kuramochi smirks at the brunette. "It doesn't matter, they are bound to know about your condition" he starts with a toothy grin.

Sawamura sucks in a sharp breath. "U-Um, about that, can you not tell everyone about my asthma problem...It's useless information"

Kuramochi cocked his head. "Why? If I didn't know you had asthma I would of took my precious ass time and you probably would of died. Both of us didn't think we'd get lost, and we did" he protested.

"Tell them, your life could seriously be in danger one day" Kuramochi frowns at his poor decision.

Sawamura gives him a pleading look. He didn't want no one finding out about his condition. If people knew he was sure they would treat him differently, and feel sorry for him. He knows from the people he watch.

It's in the movies and everything. Once someone discovers one of their friends are ill or injured they see a whole new perspective of them and treat them with respect that should of already been given to them.

He didn't want the unnecessary sympathy. "J-Just don't tell no one, please?" Kuramochi could see how much this meant to him. Even though it was a serious detail that he was sure everyone should know about he keeps it secret. "Fine. Take your medicine while I go get the bandages" he leaves with that and after he left Sawamura locks the door after him so no one gets in.

He sits back on his bed and rummages through his bag for his inhaler. He finds it, then utilizes it.

Sawamura feels his lungs practically blow up.

"Ugh, glad to be back" Sawamura groans as he takes a look at his wounds. He was indeed covered in bruises. Open wounds laying on his arms and knees makes him recoil in disgust.

Looking down at his dangling foot, he peeks at his ankle and could see the swelling from there. It was starting to turn a nasty color he was not familiar with. Sawamura weilds a lot to not submerge to throwing his earlier meal up.

This didn't look like a good sign. Oh yeah, Wakana was going to killhaul him.

He sighs, but pauses when he hears footsteps crunching outside of the cabin. Panic immediately filled his veins. "Were they done with practice already?" He was sure they took many breaks in different intervals of the day, but he was sure they weren't suppose to retire back to the cabins for a while.

He peeks at the alarm clock on the stand the TV sat on. It was 8:05, usually practice lasted until ten. Did they get to leave earlier as well?

Sawamura doesn't move for a while, curious who was at the door. A knock follows after a few seconds. "Ei, are you still sleeping?" That smug voiced sounded awfully familiar.

It was Miyuki.

Sawamura's face whitened.
wait, did he say 'still sleeping'?

The brunette's brows rose. Had people really think he was sleeping the entire time?

He blinks once. Then twice.

Sawamura didn't how to respond. Should he even say something? Kuramochi hadn't mention anything about it, but if they wanted things to seem like nothing serious happened than what could happen?

"No, but you're leaving anyway, right?" Sawamura shouts as he rolls over in his bed. The door knob rumbles, and it relieves Sawamura that he did lock it. Hearing his groan was music to his ears.

"You lock the door" the cockiness in his voice was transparent. He was impatient.

Sawamura could almost picture the smirk plastered on his smug face. "Indeed, I did. I need this thing called 'privacy' " He grins as he says this.

"You've had enough of that, Ei" Miyuki hums melodically.

"Well then I just don't want to see you" Sawamura snapped. He swipes his phone from under his pillow and could see the miss call he had from Wakana and his mom. A few messages from Mei.

"Kinda left a mark on that one"

Sawamura rolls his eyes at his sarcasm. "Unless you're not Kuramochi, don't talk to me"

This stirs something in Miyuki. "Oh?" He hears the catcher sing from behind the door. Sawamura knew he was taking what he said out of context. He was really trying to get on his bad side.

"I get it" Miyuki says in a low tone.

"I'll come back in an hour" he cackles.

Sawamura's face burn with fury. Even though Miyuki was outside he still covers his face. He was heated.

Nothing else was said after that.

He must of left, Sawamura thinks with his face buried into his palms. He decides to wait it out, watching as the time pass.

Minutes pass and a knock finally sounds at the door. "Sawamura" Kuramochi's soothing voice follows. The brunette springs up from his spot on the bed and wobbles over and unlocks the door, smiling when he spots Kuramochi.

But his face fell when he spotted Takashima Rei, Coach Kataoka, and some sort of doctor behind them. They all held impassive looks on their faces.

Sawamura felt his body tremble. His eyes fell onto Kuramochi's, staring at him with cold eyes. The shortstop ignores the look of betrayal he was shot.

"Sawamura" The shrill voice of the coach jerks the brunette's attention back up to him. "Y-Yes sir?" He stutters nervously. His legs buckled.

It was hard to make out if he was concerned or not. But the deepness of his voice said one thing. He
was livid.

"Is it true that you have an injured ankle?" Takashima finishes for him, tossing a loose strand of hair behind her ear.

Sawamura swallows a lump and looks down at his feet. He was already standing with his hurt leg up and behind his functioning one, folded so that only his toes touched the floor, but that didn't seem to be detailed enough. "Y-Yes ma'am"

Takashima only shakes her head. "Sit on your bed, we are here to check you"

Sawamura doesn't say anything. He scurries back to his bed and climbs on, wincing when his knee hits at his phone, sending a vibration down his leg.

The three adults shuffled into the room then closes the door behind them.

Kuramochi climbed beside Sawamura on the bed. "Trader" he shot.

"They were already here when I went to go get the bandages. They are checking both of us so hush" he whispers back.

When the three takes a look at Kuramochi and Sawamura only two of them flinches with disgust.

The doctor starts with Sawamura first, tending to the scabs on his arms and knees first before his ankle, which he tries his best to avoid hitting. "So" Takashima places a frustrated palm on her face. "How did this happen?" She was exasperated. That, the two could tell.

Sawamura decided to tell first, since it was him who got them into that mess. "It started yesterday actually" he starts, all eyes directed at him. He tenses up then. "U-Um, when I was practicing batting with the girls I ended up hurting my ankle...so I put ice on it and went about my business because I didn't think it was much of a bother" no one says anything. They continue listening. They were going to wait till the end to ask questions.

Sawamura digs his nail at his thigh anxiously. "When I woke up late this afternoon I was actually trying to find you guys...you know...to help out" the atmosphere felt thick. It felt like he was giving the biggest presentation in class. They were all looking at him like they had some sort of grudge against him. It bothered Sawamura.

"On an injured leg?" The doctor questions with a raised brow. He seemed to be against his decision to even leave the bed.

Sawamura decides to tell first, since it was him who got them into that mess. "It started yesterday actually" he starts, all eyes directed at him. He tenses up then. "U-Um, when I was practicing batting with the girls I ended up hurting my ankle...so I put ice on it and went about my business because I didn't think it was much of a bother" no one says anything. They continue listening. They were going to wait till the end to ask questions.

The coach shifts his eyes from Sawamura to Kuramochi. "And how did you get there?" His only question was. "Instead of practice, that is" That struck both of them. Kuramochi flinches in place, his eyes lowering at the ground. His voice was demanding, the cadence of his voice deepening.

But Kuramochi answers with a straightforward answer. "I went to go check up on him on our way back from the mountain run to see if he was up. And when I discovered he was gone I checked around the camp site. But he was nowhere to be found so I knew he had to think we were in the
forest; I went after him" Kuramochi spoke thoroughly.

"Are you hurt?" Rei spoke up with concern. They didn't need an injured player before the tournament. It could either make or break them.

Kuramochi swallows thickly. "No" he answers easily, and Sawamura tries to not overreact. He doesn't even look at him.

"Are you sure? No hiding injuries...?"

"I'm fine" Kuramochi answers quickly. Too quick for comfort. To drop the topic, Sawamura tells the rest of the story.

"Anyway, Kuramochi ended up carrying me back here" he briefly spoke, an appreciative smile locking on his lips. In a way, he was kinda hoping that saying that would lighten Kuramochi's sentence if it was hard on him already.

Once they were done with the story, the doctor slips on the last bandage for Sawamura's leg, then moves onto his ankle and begins to examine.

"Okay" The coach starts. He drapes his arms over his chest. "Sawamura" he pauses when he has the brunette's attention. "You didn't sign no form that allows for us to cover your injuries. When your parents find out they could sue us for irresponsibility of your care. We can't have you as our photographer if you are getting hurt without care, however, if you are hurt do not move from where you are" his voice is a tad bit softer but full of care.

Sawamura chews at his bottom lip. "Sorry...I won't do it again sir" He apologizes.

Takashima smiles at his behaviour. He was such a gentleman.

"As for you" The coach voice go thick with venom when he turns to Kuramochi, who tenses beside the latter. "You skipped practice, didn't inform any of the instructors of your whereabouts, and from what I was told, coaxed everyone into believing Sawamura was kept into his room asleep while you went to go find him by yourself, in actuality. That's already four rules you've broken"

Sawamura jumps at this. Did he really break rules to come find him? That he didn't know.

Kuramochi doesn't say anything.

"Look at me" The coach voice boom with rage that even the doctor and Takashima Rei was startled. Rei even steps away from a bit.

Kuramochi obliges, looking the coach dead in the eyes.

"My trust for you is already so little because of this. Do you really think I am going to let you on the first string now after this stunt?"

Kuramochi slouches in his spot. He seemed ashamed of himself.

"We have more players out there that are waiting to steal your position and partner with Kominato"

The shortstop grits his teeth at the thought.

Sawamura's stomach dropped. Was he seriously getting punished after saving him?

He felt bad. Because of him wandering off he was jeopardizing his loyalty to the team, his position,
and practically his baseball life. Sawamura didn't want that. It was unfair.

"You'll be on probation for a week, running laps in field B until I say for you to work with the first string again, and helping the managers cook for four days. I don't give a damn about that tournament, you will fix yourself" Sawamura's eyes widen. This all sounded like too much for him. He was only trying to do a nice act.

"However"

The two looks up in unison.

"You were only worried about your roommate and act like any other guy would. You ended up carrying Sawamura for god knows how long and tried to bandaged him yourself. That is the only reason why you are playing in the tournament" the coach turns to the other two. "Now, I am going to go check on the guys" he dismisses himself and once the door closes Takashima glares at the two.

"You guys are wreckless, please think accordingly in situations like that" she stares down at the doctor, who had been patching Sawamura's leg. "How is it?" She asked and it was then that the two release a breath they hadn't realize they were holding.

Sawamura looks over at Kuramochi apologetically, secretly on the verge of tears. He really didn't want him off the first string because of his mistakes. Kuramochi only grips his hand for reassurance that he was fine. But Sawamura didn't think so.

"It isn't that bad, he'll be on crutches for a good week or two before it lets up" the doctor says, placing the said object beside his bed as he stands. He stomps over to Kuramochi and begins checking his wounds. His were only minor compared to Sawamura's, so it didn't take that long to accomplish.

"See?" Takashima nudges the despondent brunette in front of him. "Most people don't get that lucky" she grins and heads to the door after the doctor is done with Kuramochi. "Also, since you are a good sport Youichi, why don't you just help Sawamura get around this one day. We can't guarantee you're okay just yet" she grins at him before her eyes fell on Sawamura once again. "Be safe"

The two heads out right after, leaving the two in mortal silence. Nothing was said for a good five minutes, both sinking in the meeting that had just took place.

Sawamura clasped his hands into his thighs. He was trying not to cry, but knowing he was the reason why Kuramochi was being punished was too much for him. It was killing him.

"See...? I didn't tell them about your condition" Kuramochi finally breaks the tension between them. He stands from the bed and ruffles the brunette's hair as if nothing happened.

Sawamura stands to his feet, but forgets about the cast and nearly falls. He manages to catch himself. "B-But that's besides the point! I'm not worried about that, I am worried for you"

Kuramochi freezes in place. He turns his head over his shoulder. "Worried for me? Why?"

Sawamura furrows his brows. "You almost got thrown off the first string because of me, I know you're mad. You can't try to pass this on as if you simply did a good deed" He argues, tears leaking down his cheeks.

Kuramochi was baffled. He didn't know why he was crying but it was making it difficult to properly look at him. He sighs. "I didn't get kicked off did I?"
Sawamura opens his mouth to protest but didn't know what to say. That was true. His lips pursed with indignation. "No, but you did lie!"

"Lie?" Kuramochi questions, feigning confusion.

Sawamura pushes the shortstop in annoyance. He was acting a bit like Miyuki and he didn't like it.

"You dummy, your arm hurts remember? What will you do if a ball hits you there or you fall on it during the tournament?" Sawamura seethes.

Kuramochi just cackles. "It's fine, Sawamura!" He continues laughing, hunching over as if it was that big of a joke.

The first year frowns. He wasn't convinced that his senpai was just 'fine'. It pained him that he wasn't taking this serious.

Kuramochi hates the look he is given. He knew Sawamura cared for him even though they just met, but why was he this sensitive even though it all turned out good in the end? He was in turmoil. Not a lot of people show concern for him other than Ryou-san, who shows it in a condescending manner. Kuramochi didn't know what to do in this position.

He didn't want Sawamura to cry over him. "Don't worry, you baby, man up" he pulls him into a gentle embrace. "Thanks for caring though, but I am fine" he pats the brunette on the back then steps back from him. He meekly smiles and is only thankful that Sawamura does the same.

Kuramochi grins, "well, since I can't practice for the rest of the night, do you still want me to help you shower?" He asked nonchalantly. Sawamura had totally forgotten about that. He rather sleep, but he didn't like the idea of smelling himself while he did. "D-Do you mind?" Sawamura was turning a deeper shade of red.

"Of course not" Kuramochi chuckles as a way to ease him. "I will only help you bathe and put your clothes on, okay?" Sawamura nods.

"Do you mind getting my clothes though?"

"Not at all"

Kuramochi genuinely does so, while helping Sawamura onto his new crutches. The brunette felt weird with them on. How was he going home like this?

It would take too long and Sawamura did not want his mom to call up to the school filing reports of grievances.

He sucks in a heavy breath as he tries out his new way of transportation. It was easy but not comfortable.

"Ready?" Kuramochi asked with both of their clothes in hand. Sawamura nods, and together, they begin to make their way to the washroom.

They go unnoticed since the first stringers were on the field, still practicing. They were doing suicides and that seemed to be troubling. "Heh, I'm actually glad I got in trouble" Kuramochi grins maniacally, happy to not be suffering anymore. Sawamura rolls his eyes and actually uses one of his crutches to hit him.

"That's nothing to be proud about, you're terrible" The brunette shot as the sound of clanking balls
and aggressive shouts fades from earshot. Kuramochi massages a hand at the foisted area, feeling like his lung gave out on him.

"Why thank you" he grins.

"You sound like Miyuki" Sawamura remarks.

Kuramochi tugs his cheek. "Now, that is an insult. You've compared me to Miyuki in the last thirty minutes, stop" he orders in a deep tone, ruffling his hair to annoy him. Sawamura snickers at his derision, glancing down at his cast.

"Do you not like Miyuki?" Sawamura smirks.

Kuramochi snorts. "I am in the same grade, classroom, and sport as him; I have to put up with his bullshit all three years here!" He exclaims in misery.

Sawamura couldn't contain his laughter. Kuramochi was just the funniest person he has ever met.

"You're not the one to talk! I hear your little arguments with Miyuki as well"

The brunette eyes him from outside of the washroom. "I'll have you know I dislike Kazuya just as much as you do, so let's form a cult" Sawamura grins.

"A cult!?" Kuramochi was quite shock with the outcome.

Sawamura nods. "Yes! We can be the Anti-Miyuki-Existence cult; AMEs!" He suggested.

Kuramochi's eyes widen. "I don't even want to know the things you think about when he messes with you. What are you- making voodoo dolls from his body parts or something?"

Sawamura blinks. "Maybe" he blatantly says, his grin widening when Kuramochi straight up walks into the washroom.

"Aye! Wait, I can't get through the door!" Sawamura hissed.

Kuramochi helps him, and they walk to the stalls in the back. Sawamura sets his crutches to the side while the shortstop starts the water. He gets sprayed, much to the younger male's amusement. Sawamura steadily slips his shirt off, and didn't know where to go from there. He looked at Kuramochi for help but he only seemed to be just as puzzled. "D-Don't look, okay?" He turns Kuramochi over and begins to pull his shorts down.

The shortstop snorts at his request, and compels himself to do so. He has his back turned towards Sawamura, looking around for anything he could amuse himself with while he waits.

He hears the rustling sound of Sawamura tugging at his clothes. It sounded like he was having a hard time since he could hear the grunts and whatnot, but he trust it was going well otherwise.

"Okay, I am getting in the shower now" Sawamura announced from behind and carefully hauls himself in. The water is a lukewarm temperature so it was easy to slide in without problems.

"Do you need help with anything?" Kuramochi asked, a faucet nearby starts up. He must have been ready to take a shower if Sawamura was doing fine on his own.

"Not now" Sawamura answers, his eyes squinting from the water raining down on his face. He felt more clean and free now that he was taking a shower.
But the melancholy feeling stirring in the pit of his stomach was telling him another story. He was still upset about the trouble he caused for his senpai. He was going to make it up to him one way or another, and Sawamura knew just how he was going to do it.

When he finishes his shower a few minutes after Kuramochi’s he roughly dries off. After he manages to clumsily slip his briefs on, Kuramochi helps him with the rest. Sawamura uses his shoulders, which were quite broad and strong, to balance himself while Kuramochi bends to help his legs correctly fit in the article. It didn't take long, but the cast was a hazard.

Water prickling down from Sawamura's hair zaps at Kuramochi's face rhythmically. "Sorry" Sawamura apologizes when a droplet of water stings at the shortstops eyes. He shakes his head, and dabs a knuckle at his eye to rid of the tingy sensation.

"It's fine" Kuramochi lifts himself up and helps pull Sawamura's shirt down his body. The brunette eventually takes over, not wanting to endanger the severity of his arm.

Sawamura continues holding onto Kuramochi until he slips his one slide on. They grab their clothes and begin trudging out of the washroom and back to their room.

"That wasn't bad" Sawamura starts. Kuramochi shoots the brunette a dingy glare. "For the most part"

"Mm" he agrees.

As the day goes on Sawamura noticed the change in attitude the players manifest when the training camp was completed. A light air of triumph wavers around, setting that mood of accomplishment within everyone. It was a vast difference from how they are now compared to earlier this morning. Aside from the camp being done, the second popular topic going around was the rumor of Kuramochi and Sawamura. Of course, the two told their side of the story and what went down, but it was nothing more of what the guys expected. "As long as you get to play in the tournament" Tetsu smiles when he had heard the good news. Though it really did suck to have to be practicing with the second stringers for a while. "As long as it's you on the field beside me" Ryousuke punished Kuramochi with a solid chop to the center of his back head. That was an inevitable attack he couldn't hide himself from. However, he ends up smiling in the end after signing Sawamura's cast along with the others.

After dinner was eaten everyone retired to their cabins to head to bed. Sawamura had played video games with Kuramochi after calling his mom. Of course, he was obligated to tell them what went down. It didn't come as a surprised when she scheduled an appointment with the coach the afternoon they returned to the school. He wasn't looking forward to the meeting since he knew his mom was overprotective about his safety being her only child and all.

From what it sound like Kuramochi felt bad for the first year. His mom was infuriated. He lays a hand on his shoulder in prayer. "It shouldn't be that bad, if you want I'll be there with you" Kuramochi insisted. "I don't want you getting dragged into anything else because of me, thanks though" Sawamura had dryly replied afterwards with a faint but appreciative smile. He really did like the support, but is that really who he would be if he was just a normal Seidou student and they happened to share classes?

Sawamura doubts that, and he would hate to see Kuramochi in a new light just because he got hurt. But he did come out to check on him even though he was unaware of his condition. Not to mention he even broke four rules to come save him. His cheeks were burning.

Did Kuramochi naturally care...or did he know that as his senpai he was obligated to?
"Goodnight, Bakamura" Kuramochi ruffles his hair in a way that is almost familiar to Sawamura. He didn't know why but he felt like they just had some sort of brotherly connection that made them this close regardless.

In a way he did think they were like brothers. Even though he is annoying Kuramochi is protective of him to not slip any information he knew Sawamura didn't want to be revealed, and in return the first year cares for him after receiving his punishment. "Mm, goodnight Kuramochi-senpai!" He gushes when his hand removes from his head.

The shortstop smiles at him before climbing up to his top bunk above Sawamura's. After saying goodnight to Masuko the lights went out and everyone fell asleep.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading! Hope you enjoyed
Daichi's Puppet

Chapter Summary

At least some things go right in Sawamura's life. But whenever something does go right there is always a downside, and Sawamura tends to forget until it actually happens.

Chapter Notes

I hope you all will enjoy this chapter. I had this ready for some time and I have previewed it so if I do miss an error forgive me...please....

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Eijun!" Sawamura looked up to see his mom and grandpa jogging down the hall of the main office in the school. He had been sitting there in a wave of silence for a while that his heart pounded abruptly with consternation at the mention of his name.

He had been tense the whole time during the forty-five minute wait that he could barely gather his own thoughts.

His mother sits into the seat beside him, enveloping him into a tight hug. "Are you okay?!" She was literally crying as she said this.

The younger brunette doesn't blame her for worrying though. After that incident years back when he was younger his mom had been full of anxiety whenever he went out on his own. It still happens, but now that the peaceful curse of a 10 year streak has been broken she was all over the place.

Sawamura squeezes her arm in reassurance, cordially smiling at her when their eyes met. "I'm fine mom" he tells her in a gracious tone.

She couldn't find it in her to speak the proper words of how she knew him going on the trip was bad news. She could only hug him, relieved that the worse didn't happen.

"You should be lucky your ma loves you enough to not kill you for going!" His grandpa exclaims while plopping down in the empty seat beside his grandson, reading over a newsprint of the latest current events. "Back in my day if ma caught you slippin and trippin in the woods you were as good as dead. Might as well feed ya self to the animals out thea while at it" he spoke, his tonality ever so intensely country and rough.

He glares back at his grandson then shakes him with some kind of solace at the teen's solemn eyes. "Just be more careful next time, okay?" Eitoku ruffles his hair.

Sawamura nods, apologizing to the both of them when he evidently can see how worried they were about him being out by himself. Guilt penetrates his veins.

His mom wipes at her fallen tears. "This is it, okay? I think I have made up my mind" she spoke
softly, her voice cracking and her body shaking with apprehension. She phlegmatically inhales to put her racing heart at ease. It seemed to have work, though Sawamura could depict a part of her that was boiling with underlying malice.

Albeit, he felt sorry that he had to worry his only family members, Sawamura didn't let what his mom said slip by. "*Wait, what does she mean by made up her mind?*"

He was ready to open his mouth to say something but he was cut off when the door to Coach Kataoka's personal office opened.

The photographer feels his mom stiffen under him, and wondered if it was because of the way Kataoka came off as first glance. He was kind of scary.

"*Good afternoon, I am Kataoka Tesshin. You two must be Sawamura's relatives*" the coach was sure of himself when he gets a better look at the two after a moment of silence. His facial expression is still inscrutable as before but a bit less jarring.

Sawamura feels his mom's arms snake from around him as she stands. Her transparent resentment towards him unmistakable. "*Yes, we are,*" she spoke with animosity. The timbre of her voice had rendered to something of a bellow. She was pissed.

"*I am his mother*" His mom says with a hand placed onto her chest. She is glaring at him with the same amount of indifference he gives to his key players when they make a mistake on the field.

Unmoved, the coach opens his door wider for the three to enter. Sawamura found it hard to swallow the growing lump in his throat as he passes by. He didn't know how this was going to end and that terrified him.

His mom had already been irked by the lack of help she was getting at the job with Sawamura not there, that he understood. So when she had gotten a call about her son's injury, she was livid; provoked.

The office is a reasonable size for the family to suit up in. A polished, syrup brown desk sat near the door where a vased plant bordered the limitations of space. Three computers stretches across the right side of the desk, and a picture frame faces in his direction. Two cabinet bins stood opposite to the wall that held the only door. To make the room more inticing than it seemed, the mixed smell of vanilla candles and brewed coffee fills their lungs.

When Sawamura enters, he is mostly overcome with ease. He sits his crutches down against the wall far from the chairs so it wasn't an obstruction, then, with the help of his grandpa, makes it to the chair at the end of the desk. His mom sat in the middle and his grandpa sat on the other end closest to the door.

An awkward silence fills the room as they wait for Kataoka to slide into his seat across from them. The click of the door closing somehow startles Sawamura.

The atmosphere was unsettling and quiet that the first year was sure they could hear his palpitating heart drumming against his rib cage.

"*I'm sure you are both concerned for the misfortune of your son's injury*" Kataoka's voice is stern and thick when he speaks up, breaking the silence. He strolls himself up against his desk until the reduction in space was a none. He folds his big, calloused hands and stares attentively at the three.

Sawamura's gaze instantly falls to his lap as his mom and grandpa interchange looks.
"Misfortune?" His mom scoffs derisively as she looks back over at the coach with an intransigent glare. "That is not what I am here for. I am here for the irresponsibility of the proctors who so poorly failed to ensure good surveillance of my child!" She argues with a raise in her voice, fisting her knuckles on the desk. The sound echoes the room, reverberating throughout his ears.

Sawamura sulks into his seat with heated embarrassment. The meeting was already off to a bad start that he actually wanted to be in class that afternoon. Didn't matter which one.

All through the morning he was filled with nothing but anxiety and worry. He knew his mom was going to go overboard, and he didn't want to be there when things got out of hand. Doing math seemed to be a much more lighter punishment.

However, despite his mom's persistent blame on the adults, the coach remains collective and stern. "Ma'am we can assure you that this is the first this has ever happened. We, the adults, are full aware of our capability to make sure every student is safe while in our presence" his voice is tender when speaking to her compared to how he is with the guys. The evidence was quite obvious.

"Then how can you explain what happened to Eijun, my only child? I am livid that you fail to protect him just as you do everyone else" she barked with augmenting rage. It seemed like nothing he told her could inject into her brain. She was being very adamant. His mom was heated and was taking this to heart. It was reasonable to argue with, but it wasn't that big of a deal, the first year thought.

Sawamura rose in his seat. "Mom, they did thei-" he tries to explain himself but is stopped by a look from his grandpa.

"Eijun, stop" His grandpa intervenes before he could say anything. He is glaring at his grandson intently, beckoning him to stay quiet with whatever unknown sixth sense he had.

Sawamura hesitantly does so, wanting to at least explain himself so that they don't go ballistic. What happened during the camp wasn't that bad if they planned to ever find out by listening to him.

Slouching in his seat, Sawamura stares back down at his legs with whatever lurking interest.

His mother continues on when her son had fallen mute. "As a mother I hope you can at least relate to how emotionally bothered I am. I know this has been going on for a good two weeks or so now but it needs to end" she finishes.

Something stirred inside of Sawamura that he never felt before. He didn't understand it at first but when it fully progressed the knots in his stomach only tightened.

"Wait, mom, what are you-" he turns to speak up again but his mom turns to him with a threatening glare.

"Eijun," she cuts him off in a strict tone. He hushes and continues to listen to what she has to say.

His mother sighs, and fixes her gaze with her son so that he is looking back at her with his full attention. "You need to switch spreads, and if that fails to resolve than I am taking you out of school and putting you into home school" she spoke earnestly.

Sawamura's body cools at the negotiation. It was not at all what he expected. He didn't know whether to be relieved or not. After all, having his spread switched was something he would have loved if it meant getting away from Kazuya. But why all of a sudden he had the potential urge to plead to his mom not to?
He was beyond confused. She was taking him out because he wasn't safe in a sport as competitive as baseball. He was a lost puppy stuck in a corner.

And to top it off if he couldn't get his spread changed she was going to home school him. There was no way out unless they could find a reasonable situation to cope with. But that was already a done deal. At this point, he knew his mom wasn't going to agree with anything he or the coach came up with.

"I'm sorry, but I have been thinking about it for a while" She starts up again as she diverts her gaze back to the coach to avoid the long silence her son was knitting up.

"My son is just too fragile to be out there with your players. He can't work under the conditions the guys can, and if I let this continue I know I will regret it when the worst happens" she bites down on her lips and entwines her own fingers together.

His mom was very sorry. Sawamura could see it in her eyes. She knew he enjoyed what he does but she wouldn't allow it under these circumstances.

"Plus, you guys can get another photographer to take your pictures, what's so important that you need my own son to do it?" The cadence of her voice softens. "If taking pictures means he gets hurt in the end than I won't allow that to happen."

"Ma'am, we-"

"No. Just talk to his teacher to get him to switch. No exceptions" her mom stands up in her spot.

Sawamura's heart tore. Was that really how this meeting was going to end for him? He didn't want it like that. He didn't understand it, but he wanted to take pictures for the baseball team. He loved seeing the smiles of their faces when they saw how cool their pictures came out, and how funny they were when he got to hang out with them.

Even though it was all in so little time it meant so much to him. And with the tournament embarking, he wanted to be there when they advanced to the finals.

A melancholic feeling drained into his body as he watches from the corner of his eyes as his mom heads to leave. His body violently shakes in spite of the room being warm.

"This isn't fair" Sawamura suppresses the overwhelming hankering to not cry as his grandpa taps at his shoulder for their leave. He helps his grandson stand to his feet and hands him his crutches.

"B-But mom, I want to take pictures for them...I want to do this" Sawamura piped up. His voice is muffled and indistinct, but she hears him anyway.

His mom looks over her shoulder at her son, who had been standing in the same spot beside his chair "So you can end up with another broken leg next time? Hell no" his grandpa reprimands.

Sawamura's lips twitched. "N-No, it's just-" he looks down at the wooden floors

"Eijun, who knows what will happen next time. We are only trying to protect you" His mom cuts him off for like the second time. "What if I get a call that your arm had been twisted, or your ribs have been fractured...I will not have you in the hospital again" she quips.

Sawamura flinches in place. He knew it was over from there. He couldn't do anything about it no matter how much he loved taking pictures for them.
Turning to the coach the mom says, "We are sorry our son has wasted your time. But just know we are doing this for his safety, have a nice day" and places her hands on the knob of the door to leave.

Sawamura chews on his lips. He begs himself to speak up, to tell her she is wrong and that these past two weeks have been nothing but eventful for him. But her mind was made up. She wasn't going to be moved because of what her son thought.

As if the coach had been in deep thought, his throat clears, and nothing but light spite comes out. "No, I am sorry you have not decided to give him enough time to improve" this stops his mom from leaving. She partially closes the door and snaps her head in the coaches direction with a hard glare.

"What's that suppose to mean?" She quips in a snarl.

As if the coach had been in deep thought, his throat clears, and nothing but light spite comes out. "No, I am sorry you have not decided to give him enough time to improve" this stops his mom from leaving. She partially closes the door and snaps her head in the coaches direction with a hard glare. "What's that suppose to mean?" She quips in a snarl.

The coaches' facial expression fails to falter. Still staring at them with those stern beady eyes of his he commences. "Have you not seen the work your son has done?" The coach asked as he places his forearms down so they restes on the desk.

Puzzled, Sawamura's mom glances over between her dad and son. "Why does that matter? I am sure what he does for you guys he can do for any other sport or club" she retorts.

Sawamura faces his mom when she speaks again. "Besides, this little discussion isn't about how much talent he possesses"

The coach nods at her acquiescence testimony. "Of course, how can I forget" he rolls up the sleeves to his button up shirt as he stares back at her.

Sawamura didn't know what to say to defend the coach. Every chance he gets is quickly retaliated by his mom or grandpa, leaving him with no chance to speak. It's like he has no say in what he thinks is best for him.

He hated this. Sawamura hates when people make decisions for him based on what they think is good for him.

No one could fathom the amount of hostility he feels when they do.

However, the second he decides to open his mouth to finally say something, a knock on the door startles only the first year. When his mom opens the door back up a familiar voice says, "Excuse me ma'am" and it quickly sums up the theory that it was no other than Kuramochi when he slips pass the two adults. The perfect person to have as Sawamura's witness since he was there the day they got lost together.

"Sorry I am a bit late sir, my teacher wouldn't release me until I finished some work" Kuramochi grins when he spots the coach sitting behind his desk. He quickly takes notice of Sawamura and his eyes go wide.

"Sawamura, what are yo-" he cuts himself off when he diverts his gaze back over to the two currently still adults that were looking back at them.

Instantly, he got what was going on. "Kuramochi" The coach drags his attention over to him with the mention of his name sounding in the room. A decrease in light atmosphere renders, and Kuramochi goes tense at the amount of rigidity in the air. "What do you think of Sawamura, our photographer?" The coaches voice held a heavy thickness the shortstop was quite familiar with. Taken aback, the first stringer glances at Sawamura who was staring at him with pleading eyes as if he needed his help
and then at the impatient mom that had been watching every step of his since he entered. Shifting his feet from side to side timidly to ease the weight his legs were slowly withering under, Kuramochi lets out a repressed sigh.

He was a bit stunned by the withstanding severity the question held. It was like Sawamura's life depended on a specific answer.

Taken off guard at the sudden question causes the shortstop to stammer for an answer that soon followed seconds after.

"Well, he is definitely better than any other photographer our baseball team has had from what I heard" he cackles nervously as he throws an arm over the vaguely taller male. "He is like a brother to me, I can say" he looks up at the brunette and ruffles his fingers into his hair.

Sawamura sheepishly grins at this, happy to be thought of as a brother to the shortstop. "He has so much potential though, and I really think he can get far with the photography skills he retains. When he comes to the practices the atmosphere suddenly gets lighter and everyone can't help but smile when around him.

"Not to mention he is a good help even though he doesn't have to be. He helps the girls put up equipment, cook food, and patch our wounds because he cares and wants to" Kuramochi's smile couldn't help but stretch bigger.

The coach nods at the answer. "Why do you think of him as a brother?" Sawamura's mom asked with concern, eyeing him up and down like he was trouble. It was look Kuramochi was awfully familiar with. But he doesn't blame her, he could come off as trouble when meets the eye.

"W-Well it's just whenever I am around Sawamura I have the need to protect him. We tease each other like brothers would and if he is in danger I would drop everything to make sure I can reach him, like when I saved him in the forest" He looks down at the first year and tugs on him tightly with the arm that was latched around him. This makes Sawamura blush-- an adorable sight altogether.

Kuramochi notoriously cackles "I carried him all the way to camp for hours, didn't even care of the rules I broke cause I wanted him safe" he smirks up at Sawamura who hardly remembers half the trip with him losing conscious half the time.

Sawamura's moms' eyes widen with surprised. "Y-You really did that for my son?" Kuramochi nods profusely as an answer, eyes staring keenly at the parent through his lashes.

"Yeah, I wasn't going to let him walk with a wounded leg" Kuramochi frowns at the idea of him even trying to limp to safety.

Sawamura's mom was at a loss for words in the moment. She was only told that her son was injured so to hear what really went down surprised her. It's not every day people go helping others knowing their life would be at risk.

She looks between Kuramochi and her son, who nods in agreement of what went down. "He got hurt as well, mom. And even though he broke the rules he still wanted to keep me safe"

His mom's jaw slacks. "I-I" she looks at her dad for anything but he was just as bewildered. "T-That's nice and everything, and I commend you for saving my son, Kuramochi is it? But that doesn't change the fact that Sawamura needs to get his spread changed"

Kuramochi jumps at this, flabbergasted. "Wait huh?" He looks at both the coach and Sawamura with betrayal.
"Mom..." Sawamura shook with sorrow. He really didn't want to switch spreads. He didn't know the reason why, but he had to stay. He felt like he had to.

"End of story, you can't. Not only that but their practices pour into your schedule at home. Did you forget about your life there? You get home very late and it worries Wakana and I" she asserts with a small frown.

Sawamura chewed at his lower lip. "Sorry..." He trails with nothing else to say.

"Wait, where do you live?" Kuramochi asked curiously. "Nagano" Eitoku answers, and even the coach along with Kuramochi is baffled. "Walking??" Kuramochi questions.

"Heavens no! He takes the train" Sawamura's mom establishes.

The coach strokes his nicely grown beard. "And you're worried about him getting home safely?" He questions, dragging the mom's gaze over at the coach.

She nods in confirmation, nervously looking around until her eyes land on Sawamura again.

"Then, let's fix that" he pulls out some paperwork from beneath his desk and perfectly stacks them onto the desk. "Why don't you let him move into the dorms here at Seidou?"

Kuramochi laughs at the idea. "Yeah, that is a good idea! He could room with me and a third year friend of ours" the shortstop settles.

Sawamura's mom look puzzled for a moment, looking between them all at the same time. "Wait, this is going too fast. Students live in dorms here?" She asked with disbelief.

The three nods. "I live here" Kuramochi says with a raised hand. "They offer dinner and breakfast, the security here is undeniably strict, and students grades excell better when they know they don't have to rush home to get things done" Kuramochi states.

"Students get work done quicker so they are able to juggle sports and schoolwork" the coach adds.

Sawamura's eyes lighten. "Yeah, mom, you won't have to worry about me if I am always here" he grins with some sort of relief.

"B-But, what about...?"

Sawamura gets what she meant instantly and apologetically smiles at her. "Weekends? When my leg heals" He smiles with a ray of hope transparent on his face.

After a moment of silence his mom gives in and signs the papers. "Only because I rather have you live here than get hurt with an injured leg trying to move back home" she says when she is finished.

Kuramochi and Sawamura both fist pumped each other with content. His mom drops the pen then slides the paperwork over at the coach.

"Does that settle everything?" Kataoka asked as he puts the paperwork away. The mother, still a bit uneasy, reluctantly nods.

She looks back at Sawamura with a faint smile. "He'll be okay here, right?" She asked the coach, looking over at him again. He nods in assurance, and even has Kuramochi nodding.

She sighs and looks as if she is about to faint from doing this. She looks back at her dad and tugs on his arms. "Of course, he'll be given his own room and everything" he nods.
"O-Okay then, by later tonight we will have your things, Eijun. You can continue with the spread, but if something else happens, it's over." his mom notifies him as she twist the knob on the door open. He nods and with that his mom and grandpa leaves.

Once the door closes the adults makes their way down the quiet hall. "Do you think I made a good choice regarding Eijun's safety?" Eitoku's daughter asked as they made their way to the exit. Her dad only shrugs.

"No one can say for sure, the world holds lots of surprises” he answers.

She nods.

"More importantly, did you see how good looking the coach is?" She madly blushes.

Concurrently, Sawamura and Kuramochi both sigh in unison when the door clicks shuts. They take the first few seconds to process what had just happened. But it was the coach who broke things off first.

"Your mother is a caring women, Sawamura. You should be lucky or else" his voice returns to it's normal harsh timbre.

The first year blushes. "Yeah, Bakamura, she is quite the women" Kuramochi smirks when he leans onto him with an inquisitive look. The way his brows seductively wiggles makes Sawamura cringe and push him away. "Gross, she is my mom!" He exclaims.

"Then get use to calling me daddy" Kuramochi jokes.

"Oh my god I can't believe I'll be living here with you" Sawamura groans while the shortstop laughs in his face.

"Enough you two. Kuramochi, help Sawamura to his next class, the bell should be ringing soon" coach Kataoka suggested as he stands from his seat.

The shortstop nods and opens the door for Sawamura to leave.

"Hey, Furuya-kun, do you think it's weird to not have Sawamura around as often?" Haruichi asked when they entered the last period that same day. They were one of the first few in class so that left room to talk more before the bell rung.

Furuya only shrugs, finding no interest in the topic. That didn't really help the pinklet.

He lays on his desk that had been turned beside Furuya's and groans. "I'm really worried about him. I don't want him being with the baseball team to effect him...especially around that Miyuki guy" he says the same time Haruno had been passing by.

She jumps at this and squeezes into a nearby seat beside them. "Did you guys here? Sawamura injured his leg while at the training camp with the baseball team."

This was news to the two. They haven't seen Sawamura all day including lunch so the look was expected. "Really? What happened?" Haruichi asked with worry.

Haruno shrugs but points in the direction where Sawamura had just been entering the class with his crutches on. "Eijun-kun!" The brunette weakly smiles at the two as he sets his crutches aside and
slips into his seat beside Toujou, who had only helped him in the way.

"Jesus, what happened?" Kanemaru grimaced when he scoots closer to Toujou.

Sawamura wasn't a fan of the attention and just blandly says, "I fell from a steep cliff. It isn't bad but yeah..."

"What the hell were you doing there?!" Kanemaru ridicules with surprised while giving a glare to Furuya after he had not so subtly commented "cool" under his breath.

Sawamura looks down. "It's a long story...okay?" The bell rings, ending the conversation there when the teacher closes the door. Haruichi stares at Sawamura anxiously, their eyes meeting. But Sawamura cuts the stare short and looks back at the instructor, who had centered himself at the middle of the class.

Everyone falls silent, allowing him the time to talk. "Okay class, today -if you need- you will start editing your spreads. Remember all spreads are due April 14, which is only five months away"

He strokes his beard nonchalantly, and glances over the class. "Okay, get to work" he walks back to his desk, leaving the class mildly confused at the sudden dismissal. But that's what he always does.

Sawamura didn't know whether he should edit or not with the pictures he had. He already had a vivid image of what he wanted his spread to look like. And so far the pictures he had weren't meeting his standards as such.

Community service on the other hand he had gotten nothing for. Then, he remembers he has to get a schedule of the community service events if he actually plans to attend.

He groans in agitation, but nevertheless withdraws his camera and begins to scroll through the pictures. "Um, Eijun-kun" Haruichi didn't know whether or not he should ask. Sawamura didn't seem to be in the mood given the look he gave him, and just left it alone.

Instead, he substitutes by asking how the training camp went excluding his injuries. He was a bit happy he got to at least know what went down, and so did the others.

"Sounds fun, it's cool you got to cook" Toujou grins from the laptop he had sat on his desk.

"But it was also hot!" Sawamura cries with incredulity as if he could still feel the heat scorching at his neck.

Kanemaru clicks his tongue. "Better than picking up sweaty gym socks and being a waterboy" he snaps. Toujou stifles his laughter.

"It's like you're not even a photographer" the orange haired boy sniggers through his palm as he pats his friends back.

"Not that we could tell" Furuya slyly adds.

"Furuya-kun" Haruichi tries his best not to laugh. "Hah! Finally something funny you've said all year" Sawamura snorts with derision as he crosses his arms.

Furuya glares at him. "Want to have another broken leg?"

Toujou grins at their relationship.

The rest of class rolls on with ease. By the time it ends, everyone is packing up and heading home.
They were lucky to at least get something done. Haruichi and Furuya decides to walk with Sawamura to the entrance.

"Are you sure you'll be okay?" Haruichi asked when they reach the front. Sawamura nods. "Yeah, my leg isn't that bad compared to before" he grins at his friend, who seemed to be overthinking everything.

He sighs. "Just making sure" he turns to Furuya. "Ready to head out?" He nods and the two waves at Sawamura as they make their way home. Unlike the brunette now, the two didn't live on campus.

Sawamura watches as they retreat than begins to head to the dorms. On his way he spots the guys practicing in the fields and smiles. Their first game was tomorrow and Sawamura could tell they were excited. He wobbles over to the field, deciding to pop by first. Instead of a little practice it was a game between the first and second stringers. It looked quite interesting given the scoreboard of 4-56. It was obvious who was winning too.

Sawamura hops onto the lowest point of the bleachers and pulls out his camera from his bag. Since some of the members from the second string were insistent he be fair and take pictures of them, he thought now was a better opportunity than ever. They were on the offensive so taking pictures were easier.

"Came to watch your senpai win?" Sawamura looks up a bit with his camera to see Miyuki in the way. He was giving that same cheeky grin that the world despised.

"Of course! And while I am at it why I don't I make a banner of your name and print out a cardboard of your face, and wear a shirt with your number on it" Sawamura exclaims, feigning excitement. The sarcasm was high-quality the catcher had to admit. But what was the point of his kouhai feeling that ounce of superiority for a second?

"I wouldn't mind that, you'll be my little fangirl" he grins as he starts to apply his catcher garments on. "Fangirl Ei,"

"I'm a boy" Sawamura corrects him.

"Your point is?" Miyuki folds his arms over his chest with a cocky smirk.

Sawamura rolls his eyes. "Don't you have balls to be catching?" He lowers his arms down to better look at the megane, whose brows rose. "That means two things" he winks as he latches the finishing piece to his armor.

"You're the-"

"Best! I know" Miyuki grins at the spiteful look his kouhai was giving him and in return cackles.

"Miyuki, time to go" Jun calls from the dugout. The catcher nods, than flashes the first year brunette another smirk before heading out to the field.

Sawamura had to admit, the whole time while he was taking pictures of everyone Miyuki was oddly good at his position despite his haughty attitude. It was almost like he had split personalities. The game thua far had been intriguing.

"Sawamura" The photographer looks up again to see Takashima Rei staring up at him with a facade of content. "Yes?" He asked as he pulls himself forward to better see her.

"Your room is ready. Since you are wounded Kuramochi and I set it up for you. Wanna come see?"
She asked, offering a hand. He nods with ecstasy and puts his things away into his bag. Rei ends up taking the bag while Sawamura focuses on using his crutches to get him there.

"We set it up the way we thought you would have wanted it. We even made the room the way yours was a bit so that you could feel more at home" Rei goes on as they walk to the first row of rooms at the dorms.

He was in the far end, not far from Kuramochi's room, Rei had pointed out. She opens his room and to Sawamura's surprise it was a bit like his old room. Just lacked the colorful wallpaper and his toys from his childhood years.

"Wow, thanks Takashima-sensei" Sawamura grins at the sight of his room. It was much to his standards.

"No problem, if you need anything fill free to contact me or any of the girls" She waves then dismisses herself from the premises.

Sawamura sets his crutches aside and carefully jumps into the lower bed of the bunk beds. He rolls himself into his blankets and grins. It really did, in a way, feel like he was at home.

He didn't know what to do first. But while it was on his mind and he really had nothing outside of school to do, he decides to finish up the last of his homework. He got around to most of it, good news. But math...you can forget it. Sawamura ends his studies there and walks back outside to check on the others an hour and a half later.

He spots Kuramochi jogging field B while the others start another game. Sawamura pays him a visit, sliding into the field and sitting in a chair outside of the dugout.

Kuramochi had seem to be concentrated on keeping breath as he jogged. He wasn't going as fast as he needed, and seemed to be doing well compared to how he was in the forest. "His minor injuries might finally be healing" Sawamura thought as he waves to him once in the shortstops sight.

"Go, Kuramochi!" Sawamura cheers as he watches the second year slow down upon approaching him. "What are you doing here?" He asked with a toothy smile. He seemed glad to have him stop by.

"I came to cheer my favorite senpai on" Sawamura grins as he relaxes into his seat. The shortstop returns the gesture. "Did you see your room? Like it?" He asked next while catching his breath. Kuramochi throws his hands behind his head, feeling his lungs stretch in the process. The brunette nods profusely.

"I really do! Thanks for making it" Sawamura bows in reverence. Kuramochi ruffles his hair with a laugh. "Of course, the least I could do".

"Well if you think that, then I will wait for you to finish running. We can eat together later when you're done" Sawamura lays back indolently with a positive glow.

Kuramochi was surprised to hear this. "Okay! If you get bored I can bring a few things out for you" he recommends.

The brunette kindly declines. "I was there too when you got in trouble, I think I deserve this also. Just won't be running" he chuckles at the obvious matter.

"Whatever you say" Kuramochi begins to run again so he isn't in any deeper trouble, and Sawamura watches. Well not the whole time. He texts Mei in between and gets water for the both of them in the meantime.
Sawamura even glances every now and then at Field A to see how the game was going. Compared to the vacant field B, Field A was a whole circus act. The rowdy outburst and sharp cries always seems to startle the brunette out of whatever daze he was in.

Ultimately, the end result is the same. By the time the game was done Kuramochi had been done jogging. They gathered their things and Sawamura headed to the cafeteria while Kuramochi went to take a quick shower.

Sawamura thought he was better off taking a shower in the night time so he wouldn't be in no one's way; he leaves it at that.

When Sawamura enters the Seidou Spirit cafeteria he is filled with the intoxicating aroma of the average good baseball meal.

"Thanks for the food, Takako" Sawamura bows when he recieves his plate of food. "You're welcome, how is your leg?" She asked with an amiable smile.

"It's a bit better, thanks for asking" he easily manages taking the tray over to an empty table in the middle of the room and quietly begins to eat. Too bad the relative silence hovering around him only ends when Kawakami and Miyauchi sits in front of him. The dainty, and flimsy pitcher was uncomfortably squirming in his seat like he wanted to get something off his chest. It doesn't take him long to break.

"Ah, Sawamura, how would you feel if you were a pitcher and someone was to touch you during a game?" Kawakami nervously asked as he sets his tray down.

The brunette raised a brow. "Huh, now?" He looks between the two with mild confusion. The more robust male heavily, huffs, steam pouring out of his nose.

"Let me reiterate," the guy known as Miyauchi crosses his arms over his chest. Kawakami groans, setting his head between his hands.

"You and Miyuki are close right?" He asked in a deep tone.

"Only in a parallel universe" Sawamura contemptuously snorts as he swallows his food.

"Say if you two were best friends and he was the only one to calm your anxiety during the game you were pitching in. Would you let him touch you between your legs to relax you?" He asked with a serious look.

Sawamura's eyes widen. "Miyuki? Hell no. But if it's some sort of technique you use to relax the pitcher than by all means do it" he shrugs.

Kawakami almost drops his face into his food at the response. He expected more from the photographer but that apparently seemed too much to ask for.

"Told ya" Miyauchi huffs.

Kawakami shoots him an exasperated glare. "It doesn't even matter anymore".

"Wassup!" Kuramochi comes over with his tray of food, freshly cleaned and revitalized; a drained Miyuki following behind while already eating at the fruit on his plate. The shortstop sits beside his young brother while the catcher sits opposite to them.

"Hey" the group says -muffled- as they go back to eating their food. It wasn't a few seconds in when
a conversation ignites."So a little birdy told me Ei is living here now in the dorms" Miyuki whistles as he eats at his food.

The two beside him almost choke on their food, not much of Miyauchi though. "Really?" Kawakami look up astounded. "The team needs a little team pet anyway" Miyauchi says, steam puffing out of his nose.

Sawamura nods with tinted cheeks, relieved they were happy to have him staying here.

"When were you going to tell? You really do know how to get under your senpai's skin" Miyuki snorts as he flickers a dirty look at him.

Sawamura stuck his tongue out. "You're a creep, and why would I tell you I am living here before anyone else?" he scowls as he takes another spoonful of his food.

Miyuki clicks his tongue against his teeth. "I would think that with you always finding a way to get to me and how you look at me, I would at least suspect some sort of strong bond between us" he winks at the brunette, to which Kuramochi gags at.

"This is exactly why I formed the Anti-Miyuki Existence cult" Sawamura bluntly adds, taking the three by surprised except for Kuramochi, who is laughing his head off at their reaction.

"A what?" Kawakami glances down at Miyuki, who is only shaking his head, feigning dismay. He is smiling with some sort of amusement on his lips.

"The Anti-Miyuki Existence Cult; AMEs! Starring your clubs photographer and big brother Kuramochi!" The first year chims.

Miyuki impishly grins. "I'm honored you two took time out of your day to reflect a whole cult dedicated to yours truly" the catcher stares eagerly at the two.

"It's not a good thing!" Sawamura shouts with a small pout, fist clenched as if he was a kid. Miyuki stares at him for a while, initially getting an uncomfortable reaction from him. Sawamura sheepishly blushes and sits back in his seat a bit quiet.

"Yeah, we're finally getting rid of your ass" Kuramochi turns to the taller brunette and the two high fives, whilst Miyuki is only trying not to laugh. This was really amusing even though it was involving his existence minimizing to a none.

"Who is getting rid of who?" Both Sawamura and Kuramochi jump at the older Kominato's voice ringing through their ears from behind. They turn around to see him and the other two members of the third year trio looking down on them with their trays in hand. They smelt of fresh strawberries mixed with a tint of grassy dew; outside.

Kuramochi finds himself stammering to find an answer when he is faced with his partner. Sawamura smirks as he gets the idea and leans out in front of Kuramochi so the third year pinklet was looking at him, his hurt leg hanging over to not be hurt.

"Kuramochi and I are taking down Miyuki! We are tired of his egocentric, self-centered ways and we need to recruit more members!" Sawamura tells boisterously. The way his excitement rapidly flashes had everyone smiling. Well...not everyone.

Jun and Tetsu both look at each other from behind the second baseman. "Where do I sign up?" Ryousuke smirks.
"Give me a form" Jun raises his hand.

Miyuki almost chokes on his food at the quick responses. "I would like one as well" Tetsu says.

"Great! I will have all the applications set in tomorrow" Sawamura clasped his hands together with satisfaction. "Pleasure doing business with you" Jun cackles as the two captains head to a separate table not far from them. Ryousuke only nods cunningly as he made his way over to Kuramochi and leans forward so that his lips are almost touching his ear. He seemed to be whispering. And whatever the second baseman was telling him in his ear was making him really red. He seemed like he couldn't even breathe.

"You okay, Kuramochi?" Sawamura asked when Kominato walked away. No words were said. He could only nod his stiff head. No amount of exercise can fix that.

Sawamura leaves it alone and continues to talk with Kawakami and them, ignoring Miyuki's remarks when he felt like he wasn't required to talk with them. Not that he wanted to give in so easily either.

Then dinner ends off there. Everyone says their goodnights and makes their way to their rooms. "You should be lucky to have your own room" Kuramochi grumbles when they make it to the first year's door.

"I should?" Sawamura repeats when he opens the door to his room. The two walks in and Sawamura sets himself onto his new bed. He kicks his one shoe off and throws off his jacket.

"Yeah, you would think rooming with one of the players was actually a fun thing. I have to deal with Masuko's snores every night"

"Sounds like a personal problem" Sawamura snickers.

Kuramochi rolls his eyes but can't help but laugh anyway. "Do you need help with showering?" The shortstop asked as he watches the first year open his bag to where his medicine was located. He takes it, seeing more relieved than seconds before.

"No, I think I got it" Sawamura assures as he stands to his feet and limps over to his dresser. He begins to take out clothes he found suitable for the night and folds them over his towel.

"Do you need anything before I sleep?" Kuramochi adds as he leans into the doorway of the room. Sawamura ponders, nothing really coming to mind as he rummages through his head.

He shakes his head. "Nope, sleep well, Kuramochi-senpai!" The brunette enthusiastically waves as the shortstop heads out the door and to his room after a wicked smirk from him. The click of the door shutting echoes the room, and Sawamura is left sitting on his bed looming through his thoughts.

It felt weird sleeping in a place he knew was not his home. Even though he knew he slept away from home when on the trip, he had it in his mind only as a trip, not as a permanent living condition.

Sawamura sighs, and traces a hand over his chest. He shivers and thrust a frustrated hand through his hair. Everything was not alright. He felt home sick already and couldn't help but miss his mom and Wakana.

He stands from his bed and goes to take a shower. When he is leaving his room he could hear everyone --faintly-- doing their own thing. In the distance, he could hear some of the players practicing their swings and the determined screams from others in the gym working out.

It was the perfect time to use the showers while everyone was preoccupied.
The night air kisses at the first year's skin, sending chills down his spine. The crunching of the grass beneath his feet gives Sawamura a kind of suspenseful vibe. It wasn't a good one but he felt as if something was going to pop out and scare him.

Sawamura enters the showers, empty but warm. He slips into an empty stall and changes out of his clothes quickly so he could hurry and shower than go straight to bed.

The shower doesn't last long. The water sprinkles down onto his hair and on his body, getting rid of whatever dirt lounging around on him. It takes about ten minutes. After the soap suds wash off his body he turns the faucet off and dries off. When he steps out of the stall Sawamura almost slips on the soapy stream of water leading to the drain.

He catches himself before he falls, his heart jumping and his mind pounding painfully at him. Sawamura lets out a loud groan from the light pain bolting in his leg and hurriedly dries himself off and changes into his clothes that he picked out.

Sawamura puts his crutches under his arm and holds his clothes. He makes his way out of the washroom to the outside being completely quiet.

Sawamura is about to head over to his room when he freezes at the mention of his name. He turns over and frowns when he doesn't find the source calling him out. He wants to follow the voice but he knew better and begins to head over to his room.

But his vision suddenly darkens, erupting a shrill squeak from the brunette. His hands have long left those of his crutches and clothes to unveil the warm feeling covering his eyes. But it's futile, and he is dragged off far from the Seidou Spirit dorms.

Sawamura rips the obstruction from his eyes but before he could make out his surroundings, the big hands that he finally realize were covering his eyes finds place back onto his face again. The brunette yelps, digging his nails at the skin of the hands.

He yells, and is about to open his mouth and ask who it was but shudders when he is pulled into a hard chest. Sawamura's breath hitches at the sudden contact and he wrecklessly stumbles back, inflicting pain throughout his leg once more. Before he could cry in pain a hand guards over his mouth to prevent anything from escaping his lips.

Sawamura, now blind and unable to talk, can only wail his hands into. But it fails when the intruder uses one of their arms to strap the first year's arms down still holding his mouth shut while the other arm is used to cover his vision more.

Immobile, Sawamura is pulled back into the muscular, bulky chest from before with nothing else to do to fight back.

A mischievous laugh enters Sawamura's ears. "What an interesting game of hide and seek we have been playing these past three days, don't ya say, shorty?" warm breath fans against Sawamura's neck that makes his blood run cold. His heart drums into his ears and his body falls limp into Daichi's arms.

"It's been a long time since we have seen each other," he struggles to keep Sawamura restrained.

Sawamura tries to fight himself out of Daichi's strong hold. But it is futile. He is still being held by him. "And you don't seem happy to see me" he chuckles menacily as he leans his face down onto the brunettes head, taking in a whiff of his washed hair.

Sawamura, gritting his teeth, throws his head back so that his head jabs against Daichi's face. He
stumbles back, and Sawamura takes the opportunity to sprint forward. He grabs his crutches from the ground and uses them to shield himself from any other imminent attack. He turns around to see the taller male staring at him with evident malevolence and steps back for safety cautions.

The brunette had nothing to say, and only shakes with fear when Daichi steps closer to him.

"What's the matter? Surely you knew this would happen right? After all it's your fault you've been gone for a while" he laughs as he launches himself at Sawamura, who throws one of his crutches at him and jumps back, falling onto his injured leg as well. He let's out a small cry as Daichi throws his crutch on the ground.

"P-Please get away from me..." Sawamura pleads as he steps back with apprehension.

"Like hell I would, we got a lot of catching up to do" Daichi runs up to Sawamura and pulls him into a choke hold. He tightens his arms around his throat. Sawamura gasped, grabbing at his arms to pry Daichi off of him.

He clenches his teeth. "D-Daich-" Sawamura's vision slurred and his voice trembles from the lack of oxygen.

"Three fucking days, Eijun. How can you have me waiting for you for such a long time? You tease" Daichi watches as tears leak from Sawamura's eyes. His face is turning a hinge of blue and saliva drips from his mouth.

He grabs at Sawamura's hair and pulls his head back so that he is straining the first year to look at him.

"It was hell having to not watch the way your face folds when I hurt you, to not hear your delightful, painful cries as you cry for help, and to watch the beauty of your body when you twist around to free yourself; such aesthetics is only praised by me. You should be treated like a damn princess" he grabs at his chin and inches his face closer to Sawamura's so that he could see the huge smirk plastered on his face.

Sawamura's heart accelerate and he begins to throw his hands around to rip Daichi's arms from around him. Eventually, the brunette recieves a blow to his injured leg, and is muted before he could scream. "Who the hell do you think you are to fight back?" He spat coldly, his voice deepening.

The brunette shrieks, struggling to get whatever air he could get into his system.

Daichi retracts a hand back from around Sawamura's neck and thrust it up his shirt. Shrieking, the brunette jumps and is shaking with fear. But falls stiff when he feels Daichi's fingers jab at one of his earlier bruises he got from previous beatings at his ribs. "P-Please stop, Daichi!" Sawamura screams out and is on the verge of collasping. "Then you should of thought twice be-" the bulkier male falls short when he caught something, and through his pounding heart in his ears, Sawamura could hardly make out what it was that made him stop abruptly.

Silence inundates between the two. Sawamura could hear Daichi's meteoric heart beating and wondered if it was something he had done. His grip had loosened so breathing was much more easier at least.

But then Sawamura hears the faint sound as well and instantly tenses up, hoping it wasn't who he thought it was.

The voice shouts,"Ei, where are you?" And two different reactions are given. Sawamura's eyes widen with trepidation while Daichi flinched with swelling antipathy.
It was Miyuki.

Sawamura's heart pounded fiercely but is quickly shaken out of his daze when Daichi fastens his hold back on him.

"Who the hell is that?" He whispers into Sawamura's ear, dragging him behind a wall so they weren't seen.

The brunette whimpers, not wanting to give a name out. "Why does he care about where you are at and why did he call you Ei?" He throws Sawamura onto the ground, but luckily the thud wasn't loud enough to attract attention.

Sawamura hissed at the pain he got from his leg and bites down on his lip to not emit any noise. "I-It's nothing serious!" Sawamura tries to defend himself. But the look Daichi was giving him scared him shitless.

"Ei, it's cold out here, where the hell are you?" Miyuki's voice was getting closer.

Daichi glares back at Sawamura and points a threatening finger at him. "We'll talk tomorrow morning right here at eight thirty sharp, be late then I will hurt you more, and if you tell anyone about this I will blow your brain out" he threatens before running off with nothing else to say.

The first year wheeps. Hot tears stinging down his face as he begins to crawl over to his crutches. His breathing was irregular and his body ached with pain. Crawling alone hurt too much.

"Nngh!" Sawamura muffles on his now dirty sleeve to hold back his cries for Miyuki to not hear him. He crawls behind a crate when he spots his shadow and bunches up with his legs folded so that he made his body small to not be seen. He covers his mouth so no sound came out, and solemnly watches as Miyuki walks down the hall Sawamura was in with his lone crutch and his clothes in tact.

He leans his body back more so he isn't seen and when he passes by, Sawamura watches as Miyuki turns behind the building across from him. In an instant, without thinking, Sawamura gets up and runs over to his dorm room, being careful to not come into contact with any of the players and surely not giving a damn about his injury.

He makes it so his door and shuts it close behind him then locks it. Tired, Sawamura falls to the ground numb. His chest hurt. His lungs hurt. Everything hurts.

He lays there for a few minutes, trying to gather everything that had just happened. The brunette hadn't been sure if what happened actually occurred. His head was endlessly throbbing and his heart was pounding too hard that he thought it might actually burst out of him.

Sawamura painfully groans as he rolls onto all fours, coughing at the thought of Daichi choking him. Even though it was over it still felt as if he was being choked.

Still coughing, Sawamura throws himself up, and he tiredly limps over to his mirror, where he examined himself. His eyes widen at the hideous sight. Hand marks were all over his neck, leaving trace that he had been hurt. The marks stretched from the atlas of his neck down to his bare collarbone.

He curses and caresses a hand over the disgusting lines. It makes him cringe with disgust and Sawamura leans over on his dresser and starts to cry. He cries at the recent pain he just endured, the threats he had gotten, and the fact that he couldn't defend himself or speak up.

It felt like he had been crying for hours. The tears blurred his vision and his body only ached with
"Dammit. Dammit. Dammit. Dammit." Sawamura slams his clenched fist on the dresser. He pulls at one of the drawers and looks for his turtleneck. It was going to be obvious. Too obvious that something went down.

Yeah it was fall, but it wasn't that cold to need to wear something like that.

It didn't matter. Sawamura threw the shirt on when he found it. When he finishes, a knock on the door startles him.

'Crap' Sawamura grits his teeth as he wipes away his tears. It was way too obvious that he had been crying and he only wishes that it was dark enough for no one to notice.

"Ei, you there?"

It was Miyuki again.

Sawamura's breath hitches and his movement to the door ceases a bit. He shakes with uncertainty. He didn't know what to do. But he knew if he didn't say anything something bad was going to happen later on.

"What do you want, Miyuki?" Sawamura's voice was bubbly and full of wist. He is still standing with the door shut, chewing on his lips to hold back his agony.

The catcher knocks on the door. "I have your crutches and some of your clothes out here, is everything okay? I found them scattere" Miyuki sounded worried even though his attitude was shit. Sawamura makes out his voice despite the layer of wood between them.

Sawamura limps over to the door and hesitantly opens it. He is looking down and only grabs his things away from him and throws them inside effortlessly. "Thanks, Miyuki. Goodnight" he closes the door, but the catcher forces it open.

"Are you okay? You sound sad" His voice is full of much concern that it began to come off as a mockery to the younger brunette. "I'm fine, Miyuki. I'm just having a rough night" Sawamura fights the urge to sniff. But he does.

"Do you want to tal-

"No" Sawamura pushes Miyuki's hand away from the door and slams it shut then locks it again. He leaves it at that, and heads to his bed to get rid of the horrific images on tonight.

But like how he couldn't escape reality, he sure enough couldn't make things better in his dreams either--as he slowly cries himself to sleep.

The next morning after a quick breakfast -away from the others- Sawamura changes into the Seidou shirt he had gotten from the team, joggers and some sneakers. His turtleneck wasn't as noticable since it could pass as trying to act like the players, so he is happy at that. He washes his face and does everything he can to look better than last night.

It was finally the first game of the Fall Tournament. A Saturday morning was the best time to spend the first game. When he is done changing he is helping the girls load the bus while the players
warmed up. Of course, he only carries the light things. And though the girls urged him to not move, he is adamant and they miserably fail at keeping him from doing so.

They loaded exactly four buses, which took a good hour or so. They had to be at the stadium in two hours at ten, it was eight now.

He doesn't forget his meeting with Daichi at eight thirty, and couldn't help but dread the moment. Sawamura didn't want to talk with him, nor did he feel like hiding more scars he leaves on his body.

"All done!" The girls chim in unison as they make their way back to the team. Sawamura follows, ending up at the field where the team was having a pep talk. They all seemed revitalized for the most part, thrilled for the first game.

The chant they initiated even gave Sawamura chills that he breaks a small smile. "It's so cool, I hope I get to chant like that before graduating" the brunette hears one of the guys say.

Sawamura already knew where that conversation was heading and walks away before he becomes a victim.

He walks to the field, where he saw Kuramochi packing with Miyuki. "Hey, big bro!" Sawamura exclaims as he lightly jumps on his back when he bends down.

Kuramochi catches him, and spins him around softly so he doesn't hurt the younger male. "Hey, are you excited for our first game?" The shortstop asked as he lays him down, turning to him with a small smile.

The first year nods his head. "Yes! But I should ask you, it's the first game of the tournament" Sawamura grins when he receives the familiar warm gesture of Kuramochi ruffling his hair. He didn't know why he found it so comforting.

"Of course I am, I spent last night going over Akikawa's stats so I really couldn't check up on you, sorry" he apologizes.

Sawamura politely shakes his head. "It's okay, nothing important happened" the brunette notices Miyuki's body stiffen from behind Kuramochi as he pulls his bag over his shoulder.

"You sure? I sent Miyuki to do so, you two didn't do anything to each other that involves my concern?" He asked as he goes through his duffel bag to ensure he had everything he needed for the game.

Miyuki coldly stares at Sawamura, who was sweating bullets at the look he was getting. He frowns, kind of begging he doesn't mention anything.

"Of course not. Ei and I are best friends, why would we ever hurt each other?" Kuramochi guesses as he hauls his bag over his shoulder.

"Whatever, I got everything I need. I'ma head to the bus" Kuramochi says as he turns to face the small brunette in front of him with a cheeky grin. "See you there" Sawamura waves as the short retires to the bus in time of Ryousuke who had been heading over there as well. This leaves the two brunette's alone and a relative silence engulfs between them.

Sawamura decided it was only fair if he starts first with an apology. He didn't want Miyuki feeling
bad about something he had no control over. "A-About last night Miyuki..." The first year sheepishly rubs at his wrist.

The catcher was staring down at him, a small smile plastered over his face. "Don't worry about it, you don't have to tell me about your little sex heist with someone" the bespectacled teen evilly grins.

The brunette's brows furrowed. The guy was really trying him with the sex jokes.

Before Sawamura had time to even come up with some kind of smart remark, Miyuki tugs onto his cheek, while adding another much heavier looking bag on his shoulder.

"Your secret is safe with me" He whispers before making his way to the bus.

Sawamura subjectively shakes his head. "K-Kazuya! That isn't true!" The brunette denies as he slowly follows him.

Miyuki even stops for a moment to allow him time to catch up. Having crutches was such a penalty. "Yeah right, are your things on the bus?" He asked changing the subject. Sawamura, blushing from the comment, shakes his head.

"Okay then, let's go" Miyuki beckons with a wave of his hand.

Sawamura is a bit hesitant at first, knowing he had to meet with Daichi in a few minutes, the brunette stops walking. "U-Um, I'll catch up to you later. I got to get something" Miyuki turns around at this, stopping in his tracks upon his friend's lack in speed. They had to leave soon and he wanted Sawamura to not make them late.

"Want me to come with you?" He asked in monotone. The first year actually couldn't tell whether or not he wanted to or not. He would have loved the extra support in case Daichi randomly popped up, but he also didn't want Miyuki getting wrap into his problems.

He declines wistfully upon seeing the catcher's strained expression. "Okay, see ya" Miyuki seemed opposed to the idea but walks off in the direction of the bus, leaving Sawamura to make it to the meet up spot just in time of Daichi's arrival. They make eye contact for several moments to which Sawamura had no idea to start for. He begins to look anywhere but at the hefty male.

The look he was giving him -Sawamura could tell- was not that of any typical warm greeting. His face is scrunched sourly that his big nose sunk into his face, and his thin brows furrowed angrily, the creases center of his forehead deepening.

The brunette gulps, and uses his crutches to back up. He looks down on the floor with a hint of suspense. It became quite evident that he was not going to get out of this with a simple talk.

"You were walking with that Miyuki guy, I saw" his arms are folded over his broad chest and his eyes turned a darker shade of brown. The air around Daichi screamed trouble.

Sawamura bites at the inside of his cheek. He didn't know why Daichi all of sudden became so possessive of him. They both hated each others guts to the point of never-ending bullying and beatings. But this was new. It was almost as if he was jealous of Sawamura being around Miyuki.

"Any reason behind that?" His voice comes out thick with bitterness. He is glaring heavily at Sawamura, repressing every ounce of rage he felt to not hurt him.

The first year stammers nervously. "H-He ju-just wanted to know if I needed help on my way here-bu-bu-but I didn't tell him where I was going exactly!" Sawamura tells him, awfully stuttering.
Daichi didn't seem impressed. "He better not call you Ei, ever again, got it? And you just might leave unharmed" Sawamura nods with understanding seeing how serious Daichi was about this.

The taller male ruffles his hair like he was a puppy that had followed instructions for the first time. "Good boy, have fun from your trip, I'll be watching" he winks at him before turning to leave.

The brunette cringes at the sight. This had been unexpected. It was baffling and too much to ingest. Minutes after pointlessly loitering around, Sawamura makes his way to the bus. He tries not to seem as petrified as he had been when he was with Daichi. He masks a solid serene face.

The corners of his lips ached as they curled upward to form a smile, and the his cheeks burn with lingering regret.

It hurt. A lot.

"Let me help you" Yui says when she is seconds away from walking onto the bus. "O-Oh, no, it's fine" Sawamura pulls his crutches away from him, a more easier way for the female to take the objects.

Yui stares at him with a persistent glare. "I got it, Sawamura" she takes his crutches gently away from him than skips onto the bus.

The brunette frowns, and makes his way up the small stairs without hurting himself. He finds his crutches in the first seat and slides into the empty spot beside them.

The bus was already rowdy with exhilaration. The guys seemed to be more relaxed, trying to not let their elation get to them.

Sawamura props his crutches correctly so they stood beside the seats. He hunches in place so that his back is laying against the steel, cool wall, and his legs are bolstered up on the chair.

Knowing the ride to the stadium was going to be a good few minutes, Sawamura's eyes fall close, and he folds his arms into himself to share the warmth when the conditioned air on the bus washes over him.

Voices flood in and out of Sawamura's ear as the rest of the players finally board the bus. Once everyone is finally situated, the bus pulls off to the stadium, and even though Sawamura wasn't playing, he still felt a bit nervous.

It may be that he was a bit anxious for seeing how the guys play against others in an actual tournament, but Sawamura knew it was also because of what Daichi said to him earlier.

He was watching him.

And Sawamura didn't want to make any mistakes if that was the case. The look Daichi had given him spoke volumes of his subdued personality. If worse was to happen, Sawamura knew he could really sit around with two broken legs if caught doing something he wasn't suppose to.

So he would obey him, for the security of his safety.
Sawamura couldn't believe that Daichi might actually be jealous of him being around Miyuki when he despises the guy!

This makes things even worse for Sawamura.
Emotionally Unstable

Chapter Summary

Sawamura really does hate Miyuki.

Chapter Notes

Okay, I am sure you are all aware of Sawamura's injury so when I write some scenes I expect you guys to know that I have not forgotten either but some things I feel like I shouldn't specify that clearly.

Anyway, enjoy this 'lovely' chapter on Christmas Day! A gift from Gei to you guys!! Happy Holidays and have an amazing Merry Christmas!

See you in the next update!!

An aggressive string of zeal mixing with a hinge of competition usually never turned out right in favour of the boisterous crowd of fans that stirred and loitered out of their seats. The over-confidence in the resonance of the ones who took baseball over the limit was always never a pleasing sight. Then, their were the spills in food, the dramatic groans emitting from the crowd every time the umpire imputed a wrong play for the leniency of one team in particular came with even more downsides of attending a game at the stadium.

Sports were just teams competing to get dirty for the sake of a win. Sawamura never saw the point in playing on the team, substantially, if you end up getting hurt in the end. It was never worth it, in his eyes.

But as he sat in the first row of the bleachers with the remaining cast of the second and third stringers, he could only be reminded of why he never grew interested in sports.

Not that Sawamura wasn't intrigued of the game. He was very content to be only watching. But as he watched the first stringers try to keen their way around the pitcher menacingly guarding the mound was just painful.

It was the first game of the tournament and Seidou was up against Akikawa. So far, the game wasn't off to a good start, well, in the favor of Seidou. No, the opposing team seemed to have studied every player in particular, as if they knew what plays were being utilized and where the ball would naturally land once leaving the metallic bat.

It was unsightly. But the guys still seemed persistent, at least. The first year was sure if that was him out there he would of been done by the third inning. Nothing just seemed to be working.

"This doesn't look good, for us, anyway" Maezono, one of the well-known second stringers, say with a blist of pity. More or less, with agony. Seeing them lose was like a mere eyesore. Sawamura
gingerly looks at the male sitting on his right side. He seemed to be in deep cogitation. It was then he realized, seeing everyone now, that they all held that shared look of defeat on their faces. Their eyes whiten and lifeless, cheeks puffy, and chest rigidly going up and down from quick apprehensive breathes.

The tension in the air was heavy. It was as if they had no life in them to cheer. More like their energy could only be heightened if the first stringers were doing good. And they weren't bad. Akikawa's pitcher was just tangibly skilled.

Not that Tanba and Kawakami weren't as good either. But the change was there. The boundaries were easily drawn, and every time it was Akikawa's turn to bat, the pitchers were easily broken.

Sawamura glowers down at the infamous pitcher of Akikawa, formally known as You Shunshin. He had been battling against Kawakami, who went in for Tanba in the fifth inning when his pitch count got too high and he walked two people in the row.

"They aren't that good, if you look at it a certain way" Sawamura spoke over the noise of exhilarating cheers that reached to the fields. He spoke to no one in particular, but he somehow managed to grab the attention of those around him. Fiddling with a neglected, stray fringe ripping from his jeans, he bluntly says, "Akikawa's team revolves around their pitcher. As long as they figure him out, we will be golden."

A few disapproving noises followed but Sawamura stood by what he meant. Others like Maezono, was full aware of the idea. "If Tetsu can't get around them, then they might as well end the game." One of the players spoke pessimistically. More dry comments following.

The first years brows knit up with acrimony. Their rancid comments were loathesome; a mockery of the first stringers. It almost felt like they were implying that they could do better. Sawamura strangled the derisive laugh from escaping his lips.

Instead, he pulls himself up, grabs the speaker cone from Maezono that he uses to cheer and turns to the field. His camera hung closely to him, encased in his hand. He was prepared for a good shot. "If I remember correctly, we are suppose to be cheering for them, not staying quiet" Sawamura spoke as he hovers his lips over the mouthpiece of the speaker.

The umpire had just called a ball on a clearly strike pitch that Kawakami gave off. The crowd was booing, but those cheering for the opponet didn't mind the bad calls. They took it how it was given. The call was now no strikes, and three balls. It was a bad way to relieve Tanba, Sawamura knew. But he wasn't going to idly watch knowing he still had faith in the small pitcher. And that had to be made public. If he was sitting with the support group just taking pictures he could take advantage of other things while there.

With all the cheer and positivity he mustered, Sawamura chanted, "Go, Kawakami, you can do it! Put your pitches to good use!" and he feels embarrass a bit when some people turn to look at him. His cheeks are burning a deep crimson but that doesn't stop him.

Coming up with another short chant, he says, "I believe in you Kawakami, pitch a strike and show the team what your worth!"

"That doesn't rhyme..." Maezono says afterwards, when repeating the phrase in his head several times. Sawamura rolls his eyes, turns around, and snaps. "It wasn't suppose to! At least I am cheering" then continues on with other cheesy comments that somehow riles the team up. The inning soon comes to a close and Kawakami doesn't allow any runner to advance.
Subsequently, everyone seemed to be getting significantly better compared to earlier. That was a
plus. Eventually, Seidou ended up catching up to Akikawa, tying them at five points. Miyuki was the
first to figure him out though, and like a domino effect, everyone did the same.

The game got enticing the point where Sawamura almost forgot to take pictures. Cursing at himself,
he takes a few pictures of the remaining last inning that indicated Seidou's inevitable victory, and the
aftermath.

Soon after, Sawamura managed to get a picture on the field of the entire amount of players that faced
off on the field. Somehow, getting their pictures made the opposing team seem much more friendlier
when the family side of them came out.

"So your photgrapher just comes with you guys on your trips? That's cool, I wish our photographer
could do the same" one of the players comment from Akikawa.

Sawamura's ears perk, and he smiles genuinely at the group of guys eyeing him with stunned looks.
"Jealous?" Kuramochi cackles as he drops his arm on the brunette's shoulder to rest against him.

"Actually, yes" the other shortstop nods with a vague frown. "I would of been motivated as well if
someone that hot-headed and energized cheered for us."

Sawamura bluses, knowing they were referring to the few slide comments he gave Miyuki after
being pissed off by the drivel accusations of having 'terrible chants'. He couldn't help but remark on
his behalf.

"See you guys around," Sawamura waves as the team heads off. He is about to head off the field but
ends up before spotting the pitcher of Akikawa. "Hey, wait!" He calls to him before he could leave.
He hobbles over to the pitcher, having a panicked Kuramochi in tow in case he tipped over.

"Shunshin, is it? Can I have your picture?" Sawamura asked with a euphoric smile when
approaching him. He had been so engrossed to take more pictures from the feedback he had gotten
from You's teammates that he couldn't help himself. May it be the friendly atmosphere he felt with
the team winning their first game of the tournament and knowing he had an impact was something he
felt proud of.

The male held an evident composure of disinterest. His cold gray eyes held a level of antipathy. But
his stoic, serious demeanor didn't seem to be letting something sharp and bitter leave his lips. Instead
of a retort of some kind, his shoulders drop, and his face softens in some sort of way.

Sawamura blinks expectantly, staring at him with patience as Kuramochi folds his arms over his
chest with such oppposite. "I don't do pictures," his voice is much more harsh and deep than
Sawamura thought it to be.

"Just take the picture, he isn't asking you to sign an unwanted autograph or anything" the shortstop
quips with a twitching brow. The bespectacled pitcher scoffs, his lips pursed. He presses his glasses
up the bridge of his nose in a gradual, repetitive motion.

"Why do you want my picture?" Shunshin retaliates with another question. Bitterness still lingering
in his ever so 'smooth' timbre. The guy was annoyed with Sawamura. It could be his overwhelming
bubbly personality or the persistency to demand a picture from him. Already, the first year brunette
was a nuisance.

But Sawamura's cheeks puffed up with air like a balloon, and his nose is red from the immense heat
blasting down on them. His eyes are still shimmering with it's natural glow, and his hands are
squirming fervently on his camera. "I took a picture of the rest of your team, it isn't a team without their pitcher" Sawamura smiles generously, staring at Shunshin through his long lashes.

The taller, stern male, gives him a catechizing looks. His charisma was something Shunshin was not a fan of. He sighs, and after exchanging a transient look between Kuramochi—who seemed to be orally prepared to shut him down with a few words if he were to reject-- he gives it a quick thought.

The adamant [demanding] look Sawamura was giving him also didn't seem to be enough to get him to do. But, nevertheless, Shunshin sighs again. "Fine" he simply answers, serving a smile to Sawamura's face and sparing his life concurrently.

The two walks a reasonable distance from the latter, who awkwardly stands on the tip of the mound where told to be, and does a simple pose. He doesn't smile, nor does he attempt to brighten his appearance.

But Sawamura didn't mind. As long as he got him to accept the request. He takes a few pictures, and looks at them with admiration. "Thanks, Shunshin" the brunette squeals. He tries to smile. It doesn't work.

He walks away with no question about how the pictures came out. Sawamura frowns with concern and tilts his head. "That's fine, Sawamura" Kuramochi pats his back with comfort as he help him back into the stadium. He is grabbing at their bags and is careful to make sure Sawamura doesn't fall by going down the stairs or stepping in a spill.

"Do you need to use the bathroom or anything?" Kuramochi asked the moment they passed by the stalls. Sawamura gives it some thought before going with a simple 'no'. Shrugging, the two continues on. They met the third year trio outside waiting for the rest of the team before they got on the bus.

A lot of comments bustle around from passing fans. Mentions of spectacular plays being named. Sawamura chews at the inside of his cheeks as this happens. He wasn't much of an attention spammer, and playing a sport as famous as baseball in Japan; no thanks. He was well off behind the camera.

"You should be honored, Sawamura" Tetsu starts after waving off a couple of teenage girls around their age. Sawamura is brought to reality at the mention of his name, scrutinizing the words the clean-up batter articulates with a debriefing, raised brow. This was staggering.

"Why?" The brunette presses himself up from the wall he was leaning on to support the weight the fatigue of the early morning showered on him.

Jun harrumphs, as if the phrase wasn't enough to hint where this was going. With crossed arms, and that aberrant look on his face, the center fielder shouts, "Because, with you cheering we somehow conspicuously managed to win the game."

The smaller of them hums with discomfort. "We are going to get yelled at, y'know?" He chastised with a ominous aura. Kominato's face was distorted, brows knitted tightly and lips packed thinly together with temptation.

"Thanks for the reminder" Jun satires, rolling his eyes. The caricature news much to his already crumbling merriment. It was good that they won the game, but to win from a simple cheer that they get from the crowd as a whole and their teammates stirred confusion. Why is it that when Sawamura says something, everyone markedly gets better.

Initially, an inevitable punishment was for the first stringers. But they knew they weren't the only
ones being punished. That they knew. "You guys advance to the next round. That's all that matters"
Sawamura pipes up with a dusty blush painting his cheeks.

Kuramochi throws an arm over him and grins. "Hell yeah! And you will be there to get all the shots
when we go to the spring tournament, too" he cockily grins. Sawamura's smiles widens. He believed
the guys could get there if they put all their work into it.

The third years held a euphoriant physique. It was a familiar air they loved enduring in the moment
when that 'This is real' air floats around them. The possibility that they have a real chance to make it
to the spring tournament always gave them that anxious feeling in their stomachs.

Flash!

Jun's eyes dilate at the sudden streak of light that scintillates over his eyes. He blinks for a moment,
then looks at the other two third years, his vision swirving in a pitch of black spots.

"Did you take a picture?" Jun asked the most obvious question. Sawamura gushes as he lowers the
device in his hands. "You guys seemed to be at ease and off-guard at the moment, I figured it was
the perfect moment" he encased his lips behind his compacted hand.

Tetsu only smiles, no sign of protest expressed on his face. Kominato, on the other hand, suppressed
the urge to grab the camera out of the first years' hand and delete the image for catching him spaced
out.

But he didn't have a chance with the rest of the team approaching. They all head on the bus. Filling
into the seats they sat at from before. Sawamura settles onto his seat with a heavy sigh, resting his
crutches to the side.

He was tired even though he hadn't been the one running around diving in the dirt. Taking pictures
was just as exhausting. This was why Sawamura never commits to doing anything involving
exercise. He gets tired just lifting his arms.

The ride back to Seidou wasn't as tensed as Sawamura anticipated it to be. The guys were still
talking about the cool plays they performed, and the surprised looks on the contender's faces when
something astounding happened. The photographer, however, had been hazily scrolling through the
pictures with a complacent look written over his face.

He was mesmerized by the awe-struck lighting that made the picture bloom, making the setting
stand out. The frame of whomever the picture was taken of held an abundance of determination to
perservere, strength to tenaciously move on despite the haphazardous obstacle in front of them.

Sawamura loved all of their pictures. It held a lot of their personalities tied into their actions. "Maybe
it wouldn't be bad" Sawamura thinks to himself when he stops on the picture of the team that took
part in the game. His insides warm as he scans over the players. Kuramochi and Kominato had been
standing next to each other with pugnacious, menacing glares, Kuramochi punching a fist in the air
while an arm draped over the pinklet's arms, Masuko stood beside them with a hungry look, smiling
animatedly, Miyuki simply posing with that cocky smirk of his--helmet guard in hand, Tanba and
Tetsu standing with endeavoring glares, Jun taunting Kawakami, and Shirasu standing beside the
second year pitcher with a charming smile.

"If they went to the tournament in spring...” Sawamura feels his cheeks hurt by the blush. He really
enjoyed being around the team. A sense of want registers around the air when he is around. He feels
needed; paramount importance.
It was rare, but it was happening. More than rare. It was infrequent really. Ever since he got chosen to work on the baseball spread things have seemingly gotten better for him.

Well...for the most part anyway. There has been some mishaps that had Sawamura rethinking his decisions.

Even though things have been going swell for him, it didn't help that Daichi has been becoming increasingly overprotective? Of what Sawamura does. He didn't know, it was inexplicable.

At first it was just simple name calling. Then every time he saw him Daichi was sure to leave any sort of mark that would have him in pain. Sawamura knew he was weak; defenseless. He never much holds himself up when going against Daichi, for safer measures. It didn't bother him really, he was use to being simply bullied.

But then he started to hang around the baseball team more, and from there, it only has gotten worse. Getting beaten for being around people he was literally forced to work with?

Sawamura hated Miyuki. Everyone knew. But why did he have to stay away from him of all people? If anything he was glad to have this dwell on him. He would have loved to stay away from Miyuki as far and as long as possible. If, by all chances, his perpetrator wouldn't accuse him of any peculiar doings with Miyuki, than getting beaten right after, maybe, he wouldn't have listened.

But he was. Beating after beating, scars on top of scars. It was a hideous sight. And listening seemed to be his only ray of light. His only--diminishing-- source of hope.

Sawamura's face twist as he cringes at the pain in his lower abdomen when he repositions himself in his seat. He could still feel the powerful kick he was given to his gut with such real velocity. It was as if any movement he made he could still feel the torment being inflicted on him. It was painful, excruciating even.

He hadn't felt the pain until now, when his focus was away from taking pictures and moving around to do so.

If he were to change his spread would it have made a difference? He would still either be around a team of guys or girls, still being told what to do, and beaten if he did something wrong by mistake.

When realizing this chain of reaction, Sawamura saw no point in changing his spread anymore. He would stick with baseball, for whatever reason he could come up with.

The bus slows down once in front of Seidou. Sawamura is rewarded with help to ease his way off the bus. He didn't feel well enough to stay around and watch the guys practice. Even though they just won the game he should at least do something about their first victory. But maybe he do so later at dinner.

"Are you heading to your room, Bakamura?" Kuramochi asked when he catches up with the lone first year way ahead of the others. Sawamura forces a smile on his lips to shelter his sickening face.

"Yeah, I am kind of tired from the rush of the game. How do you guys still have energy after that?" Sawamura sickly chuckles as they make their way to the dorms. Kuramochi had been holding a bat in hand, spinning it dynamically between his fingers.

A brazen smirk tracing his lips, and his signature laugh echos in the halls the dorms sat in. "We are kind of use to doing strenuous workouts right after games. It eases our muscles...and because we are expected to" he snorts with another high-pitched laugh.
Sawamura tries to smile. His mood from the bus ride back had tremendously dropped. All because he was musing about Daichi. His body shakes intensely, and not only from the gust of the cool winds.

They stop at Sawamura's dorm, which the brunette hadn't realize they were verily close to. "Well I am going to rest, I will probably come out in an hour or two to see how you guys are doing".

Kuramochi nods at this. "And if you don't find us, some of us will be in Miyuki's room" the shortstop notifies this time, emphasizing the location. Sawamura blushes when he knew this was reference to when he got lost in the forest. It was an event he did not want to remember.

The memory painfully comes back from time to time. Kuramochi chuckles at his redden face and pinches his cheeks with delicacy. "W-Why Miyuki's room?" Sawamura hesitates to ask.

Kuramochi pulls away from the photographer and folds his arms over his broad chest. "Because, that lucky bastard is the only player on the team that has a room to himself. And since that lucky son of a-" he cuts himself off when he is met with Sawamura's widen eyes.

The first year laughs at his strengthy language, and can only watch as the shortstop tries to restate his words. It doesn't happen. "Bitch...you're not stopping me from calling him that" he says with narrowed eyes.

Sawamura cackles once he is poked in the side. "And while he is living in luxury _alone_, the third years and I have been crashing his place basically after every game to pay him our respects" Kuramochi smirks impishly with devilish brows.

"You like making Miyuki's life a living hell don't you?" Sawamura nibbles on his chapped lips knowingly. The shortstop ruffles his little brother's head with a tranquil look. "We all do, now get some rest" Kuramochi tells him, patting his back.

Sawamura nods and watches as Kuramochi jogs his way over to the field to meet up with the rest of the guys. The brunette gushes, as he watches the profile of the shortstop disappear in the distance.

He heads into his room and places his things down. The crutches go to the side and his camera is tossed, delicately, on his desk where his unfinished homework sat. Sawamura didn't realize how tired he was till he felt the heaviness in his injured leg weighing him down. He slides into his bed and pulls off his Seidou shirt and joggers, leaving him in his black turtle neck and boxers.

Sliding into his bed, Sawamura quickly succumbs to the lethargy in his veins. He didn't feel like doing anything while enervated. He closes his eyes, and heads to bed, spending the rest of the day in bed.

It was Tuesday before Sawamura knew it. He had decided to not go to school today when he remembered about that guy having his first game that same day. He told Kuramochi he wasn't feeling well, and that was all he really needed to get off easily. He had been on the phone with Wakana that morning catching up with her as well, telling her where he was going.

"I don't think that is a good idea Eijun, you are already hurt. What if something was to happen to you while out there?" Her voice is full of worry and uncertainty. Sawamura changed into a red bleached tee, black pants and black shoes...on his unhurt foot. His injured leg had been feeling better with the prescribed painkillers he gotten from the doctor so he was able to squeeze that into his pants and leave his foot dangling.
Sawamura wore a fluffy peachy jacket that covered the entirety of his neck. That was good news alone since the marks on his neck hadn't disappeared yet.

"It's fine, Wakana, I won't get hurt!" He contends adrenalized, blushing as he checks himself out in the mirror. The attempt to comb his hair went askew when he noticed the wind would be ferociously blowing today. It didn't matter though, the longer he stared at himself in the mirror the more he seemed to look like a girl.

If he had some eyeliner and lip gloss with jewelry he was sure he could pull that off. It was more of the jacket making him look that way. It was a jacket Wakana bought for him a year ago that he never really insisted on because it looked like it belonged to a girl. "No, Sawamura. I am going to tell your mom you are skipping school"

Sawamura felt his eyes narrow. Why was it only now he realizing that his childhood friend was a complete buzz kill?

"Please don't Wakana, I just want to make it to my friend's game" Sawamura pleads into the phone as he grabs his crutches and places them under the pits of his arms. He hears Wakana make a noise of disappointment. Sawamura could imagine her shaking her head with her arms crossed over her chest. But she sighs in the way that was familiar to him.

It was the heavy sigh she would normally give him when he asked her to cover for him at work when he had to run an errand or finish homework.

"Thanks, Wakana. You're the best" he compliments with a genuine, charming smile. "Whatever, if something happens to you then that's your fault!" she hangs up. Sawamura grins as he puts his phone in his butt pocket and makes his way out of the dorms.

Yeah, going to a game with a hurt leg might have been a bad idea. But he didn't know how good his friend's team was to advance to the next round. And as far as he was concerned, the losing team doesn't play in tournament after a simple loss. He wanted to be there in either for his support when they lost or to congratulate him.

The wind blowing against his frame is formidable. Sawamura had to cling to his crutches to ensure he was still on his feet to not be blown away.

He makes his way to the bus stop outside of Seidou, lucky to not have been caught by anyone. It was a bit nerving as he stood there waiting. He never skipped school before to go meet up with someone. But if it was for baseball reasons than he should be allowed...right?

No.

He is only a Seidou photographer. He doesn't take pictures of other schools unless his team plays against them.

Sawamura couldn't even remember the guys name. But still, he remembered telling him he would meet him up at his game Tuesday to come and cheer for him. He hadn't brought his camera like the guy joked about but he had a feeling he had more opportunities in the near future to do so.

The bus comes, and Sawamura stepped on board with the help of another passenger coming along. He thanks them graciously, then pays his toll and takes a seat in the nearest one that had not been of less atmosphere.

The game started around ten if Sawamura could recollect. It was around nine thirty so he had time to get settled upon entrance. Sawamura felt his insides twist into knots at the thought of going to watch
a game on his own. He would be watching his friend play, which should be exciting.

His body warms, and Sawamura's mind is running with wild thoughts. He can never take into account the many times he has actually gotten out to meet with a friend other than Mei and Wakana.

It may have been the sun flaring down on him that increases the heat his body was generating, or his racing heart ramming copiously against his ribcage that was making him feel lightheaded. Whatever it was, Sawamura didn't mind.

When the bus pulls up to the stadium minutes later Sawamura gets off and timidly follows the groups of people heading into the stadium. The ear-splitting noise of the bustling crowd fanatically eagered to watch the game gave Sawamura a headache.

It was almost close to impossible to get anywhere with the meager space between him and the crowd that forced Sawamura to basically not move. People mindlessly ran into his crutches, nearly pushed him over, and abruptly stopped in his way which forced him to bump into whoever stood before him.

"Ow-!" Sawamura winced when pain imposes on his leg. It's less severe so the pain dissipates faster. He withdraws from the crowd, falling out of line into an area that was less accumulated. It was way dangerous for him than he thought it would be.

"It's so crowded here...I don't think I'll find him" Sawamura says to himself as he looks around the crowd. He squints his eyes but no one in particular stood out to him. The first year was sure he would remember his face.

Sawamura is careful to not hurt himself as he walks around. Too cautious to cause himself more pain, he decides to look for a seat in the stadium. He didn't want to sit in the back nor did he want to sit in a wrong area and have to deal with talkative people or food being webbed in his hair.

With his situation getting worse, Sawamura is knocked by someone and roughly falls onto the ground with a loud thud. Pain shoots throughout his leg and a cry escapes his lips.

"A-Ah, I am very sorry! Let me help you" A insanely brittle voice comes to play. Sawamura pushes himself up using his forearms. He is lucky to have worn the thick jacket that broke his fall.

A hand slides into view, and Sawamura looks up to see a guy shorter than he was with messy brown hair, constricted brown eyes, and an overlapping scar on his left cheek. He is wearing a black and white striped uniform and a black hat on backwards.

Skittishly, Sawamura accepts the hand and is allowed to be pulled up by the male. Despite his small stature the guy was pretty strong--his hand, callusly hard.

"Crap, I am so sorry! Ah, Sananda-senpai is going to kill me!" The short male panics once he hands Sawamura his disregarded crutches.

Sanada. That name sounded familiar in Sawamura's mouth.

Sawamura grunts from the stinging pain, and can only steady himself back onto his crutches. "I-It's fine, just watch where you are going ne-"

"Sawamura Eijun?" Sawamura blinks his eyes at the mention of his name and turns his head over his shoulder to see the familiar facade of the male he had met back at the Fall Tournament drawings. His cheeks flared red at the sight.

"U-Um-!" Sawamura is taken by surprise. He was wearing the same uniform as the shorter guy had
in front of him. The uniform outlined his muscles perfectly, and his face was glowing radianty. "You did come, I was afraid you forgot" He chuckles at the blush creeping across Sawamura's cheeks.

"N-Nope, how could I forget?" Sawamura stammers as his eyes involuntarily wander around.

"Sanada-senpai! I didn't mean to do it, I-I accidentally ran into him and he fell, please don't tell dad! I don't want him to take away the ban-"

"Raichi, banana?" The tall male interjects with the said fruit in hand.

The short player automatically falls mute, and runs up to Sanada and gently swipes the fruit away from him, snarking down on the small snack.

Sawamura's eyes widen at the change in attitude. "Thanks, Sanada-senpai!" Raichi drools with delight. He looks back at Sawamura and raises a brow. "Do you two know each other?" He asked with a notorious grin.

Sawamura shakes his head while Sanada says, "This is Eijun, my friend" he introduces politely. Raichi grins when their eyes meet, and held his hand out to shake Sawamura's hand. "I am Todoroki Raichi, the best baseball player in all of-"

"Raichi, hush. Your dad doesn't want people to find out you're stupid" Sanada retorts with a smirk that dramatically sadden the latter. "Does it matter? He's already a failure! If he sucked at raising me then he might as well go suck a-"

Sanada snaps a hand over Raichi's mouth before an unpleasant word is vocalized. Sawamura's eyes widen at the tone of the players voice. He was very quick-witted.

Chuckling, Sanada glances at Sawamura and says, "He's our coach--their relationship is on and off" and everything made sense than.

It wasn't until he looked down that Sanada took notice of Sawamura's injured leg. "Hey, you okay? What happened to your leg?" The heavy amount of concern his weighed in his tone cooled Sawamura's blood.

"O-Oh, it's a long story, but I will tell you if you promise we can hang out more" Sawamura wagers with a stunning grin.

Sanada smirks, taking on the deal. "You'll see" He winks with an impish grin.

"Are you staying to watch us?" Raichi pipes up after finishing his banana. Sawamura looks down at the smaller male and shakes his head excessively. "Do you guys know where I can sit?"

"Of course, wouldn't want you to be uncomfortable while you watch us" Sanada winks as he turns to lead them to the bleachers. The trip there was much joyous. Sawamura got to discover that his two new friends were students attending Yakushi high. Raichi was a pretty good batter and played as the third baseman whereas Sanada was the ace pitcher and would normally start off playing first baseman.

"If you're the ace shouldn't you start off first?" Sawamura asked with an endearing look as he look up at the Yakushi pitcher. It was something he was sure was a fact. Tanba started the season off first for Seidou-- unless schools have different starting methods.

Sanada clicks his tongue at this. "Not really, I start off when the situation is dire" he says
nonchalantly, and throws a protective arm around Sawamura to carefully help him down the stairs of the bleachers.

It was the perfect spot on their side with a close view of the entire field. Raichi had been excitedly jumping behind them, impatient to swing the bat.

"Oh" Sawamura is placed into a seat in the first row. The section was partially full, but not empty either.

"Do you need anything to drink or eat? I don't want you to starve while you're out here" Sanada asked kindly while quieting Raichi down.

Sawamura blushed at the offer. "N-No, it's fine. I'm good" the brunette answers honestly. The cool air sweeping against his face sending shivers down his body. He was still cold despite having a warm, cozy sweater on. He kinda felt bad that the guys had to play in this weather.

"Okay, well the game will be starting shortly, see you afterwards" Sanada benevolently smiles. Even though it was freezing his smile could melt a whole glacier. The gesture was enough to make Sawamura feel warm in the inside. Returning the smile, Sawamura wishes them luck on their game.

"See you soon, Sawamura!" Raichi waves eagerly while holding onto the hem of Sanada's shirt. Sawamura waves back with much enthusiasm. "Bye, Raichi! Good luck." With that Raichi sprints up the stairs, leaving Sanada in the dust, who only chuckles. "See ya, Eijun" he winks at the brunette before ascending back onto the stairs.

Still blushing, Sawamura gazes down at the field to see the two competing teams readying. He was nervous. He really did hope that Sanada's team won. He would hate to see them lose right away before the season barely started.

But he calms his nerves anyway. He had faith that Yakushi would win. After all what the two said really had him thinking Yakushi was all that.

The game starts ten minutes later. The first inning commencing with the opposing team, Teito high School, batting first. Which meant Yakushi would be fielding.

Sawamura's face brightened when he saw Raichi and Sanada heading onto the field with another player of theirs. They had been talking about something but ends it there with reassuring pats on the back and high-fives.

All of them respectively heading to their positions. The more chubby guy, Mishima Yuuta, would be starting out as pitcher. The first batter comes up, and Sawamura leans forward in his seat to see how this was going to play out.

Sawamura felt his stomach do a black flip. His heart was hastily ramming against his rib cage. God, why was he so nervous even though he barely knew Sanada?

The first inning was a quick one, two. When the third batter swung the ball in Sanada's direction, Sawamura's heart almost stopped when he watched the latter jump up and catch the ball with such ease to end the inning. It's when Sawamura felt himself inhale that he then noticed he was regularly breathing.

"Yay, Sanada-senpai did it!" Raichi exclaims when he jumps on the pitcher after they make it into the dugout. Sawamura shields his mouth from the radiating smile at their brotherly relationship. It was kinda similar to the way he and Kuramochi got along.
When it's Yakushi's turn to bat, Sawamura grows with exhilaration. He is waiting to see Raichi and Sanada bat. The first two batters safely make it on base while the third batter retires. That was fine, Sawamura could see an easy few points in Yakushi's future.

Then, Raichi comes up. "Oh, Yakushi's clean-up hitter?" Sawamura was quite amazed. He hadn't been told that he was the fourth batter which makes him rethink what they said. Maybe the two were reliable players.

Sawamura watches with astonishment as Raichi's scandalous laugh echoes the stadium. Somehow his cackle was enough to intimidate not only the adversaries but the fans watching as well. It's echo continuously ringing in Sawamura's ears.

"Go, Raichi!" Sawamura cheers from the stands. The fourth batter halts in step, and his stern, malvolent facade descends into a bubbly, ebullient gander. "Oi, Sawamura, I'm batting!" Raichi fervently waves as if it wasn't obvious already.

"Do good, Raichi!" Sawamura calls out. He is about to shout more encouraging words until he spots Sanada staring up at him with a small smile. He had been checking out the weight of the bat he was holding. Sawamura blushed at the way Sanada was looking at him. It was like he was mesmerized.

Waving at him, Sawamura sheepishly sits back in his seat, deciding to do something that wouldn't embarrass him. He watches Sanada chuckle at his timid expression, and waves back amicably.

Returning his attention to Raichi, Sawamura watches as his focus drifts to full on concentration. He suddenly seemed so big and mighty on home plate. "Hit it big, Raichi" Sanada calls out.

The batter egotistically laughs as he raises his bat. Teito's pitcher calmly pitches and Raichi doesn't hesitate to swing powerfully at the fastball leaving his fingers. The bat swings over the ball in a quick second, an immediate strike at that.

The fourth batter grins. "Not as shabby as I thought" Sawamura could of sworn he said. His eyebrows rose. Was he some sort of batting prodigy?

Raichi raises his bat over his shoulder. "Give it to me again!" He laughs hysterically. Sawamura shivers. Why did baseball make everyone have a different side to them?

Teito's pitcher, Mukai, sticks his tongue out with annoyance. "Tch," he purses his lips as he catches the ball from his other half of the battery. The second ball was fouled. "No, not that one!"

Sanada's lips curled up. "Raichi, if you strike out then you can find your own way back home" he calls out—a message from his dad.

The third baseman shoots Sanada a glare meant for the coach. "I'll show you!" Raichi shouts as he readies himself again.

Sawamura laughs. Yakushi was such a comfortable team to be around.

The next pitch, however, went as Raichi told it to be. The pitch that was meant to be a breaking ball goes spiraling over the fence and into the empty stadiums on the other side. "There, happy!?" Raichi tosses the bat aside and paces around the bases of the diamond. The crowd is screaming after recapping what just happened, still shock from the sudden homerun in the first inning.

Even Sawamura's jaw held agape. He hit a home-run like it was child's play. And he was a first year?
"Show off!" Mishima snaps when Raichi jumps on home plate and notoriously laughs. "Miss-shima, don't be jealous!" The clean-up hitter devilishly grins as he high fives the passing Sanada.

"Do good, Sanada-senpai!" He tells his friend as he retires successfully to the dugout to ramble his dad out.

Sawamura chews at his lips as he watch Sanada step in the right batters box. "Go, Sanada!" The brinette cheers for him to lessen his nerves. He only wishes he brought his camera. Getting a picture of Sanada's remarkable fielding and Raichi's imperilling batting form would've been like obtaining a rare artifact.

It was no luck in Teito's favour. The first pitch given to Sanada had been blown away deeply into center field. He swiftly tossed the bat aside and took off running. It was as if Raichi's home-run had an impact on their playing.

"Yay, Sanada-senpai!" Raichi jumps with content as Sanada safely slides to third base without having the ball chase him down. The crowd goes wild for Yakushi's top-tier batting lineup. They had definitely won the crowd over.

Sawamura's eyes widen like a pirate that just struck gold, a child who found a box of candy. His jaw hangs slack and his cheeks burn intensely. These two were something.

Their eyes met, and Sanada gives Sawamura a fist pump in the air.

Oh yeah, this was not going to be the last time they saw each other. They both could tell.

"You don't go out a lot, do you, Eijun?" Sanada asked as he drops the cup of water down next to his small meal. He had cut the brunette off, but it wasn't taken into offense. The first year only blushes at the ludicrous accusation and thrust a hand through his hair. The wind blew against them, reminding them of the seasonal winds. He did have a point.

Sawamura hugs at his arms to share warmth between himself. "N-No, I don't" he ruefully smiles, trying not to sound despondent about the topic.

"I'm not really a sociable person..." He says with thinned lips. Sawamura tries to smile but couldn't find the energy to do so. It was weird going out for him. "I never really had a lot of friends growing up so I am really isolated most of the times" he blushes madly.

Sanada shakes his head. "I see," He hums in a tender tone. Staring at Sawamura, he watches as the fringes of his hair animatedly flutters about, tickling at his forehead and lashes. His golden orbs
twinkle with innocence and his skin immaculately reflects his vivacious temperament.

The pitcher rest his chin into his palm. "Well then, do you want to hang out more?" Sanada asked as he continues to eat his food.

Sawamura tries to hide his blush. "Only if you want to" he says, sipping at his hot chocolate.

"Of course, I want to learn more about you" Sanada says with an interested stare. "Really?" Sawamura was in disbelief by the statment. No one had really been engrossed in his personal lifestyle, and his closer friends were too busy doing things of their own to actually listen to what he had to say.

"Mhm, why don't we hang out more? Outside of the stadium, I mean" Sanada suggest while retrieving something from his pants. He slides it over to Sawamura.

It was his phone.

With the contact list tab opened up.

"Sly, Sanada" Sawamura giggles cutely as he inserts his number into the phone. He hands it back over to Sanada and eats at the rest of his food.

"Why thank you, Eijun" Sanada grins. He finishes the rest of his food and stands to his feet after taking a glance from his phone. "Hey, want me to take you back to your place? I don't want you to head back on your own while hurt" the pitcher offers with an insistent hand. He warily pulls the smaller, brittle teen up to his feet, and helps him balance onto his crutches.

"Oh? But I don't want you to get in trouble for not being with your team!" Sawamura exclaims with worry.

Sanada chuckes at his overly concerned attitude. "I won't get in trouble, promise" he holds out his pinky. Softly chuckling, Sawamura entwines his pinky around Sanada's.

"O-Okay then" he says, flustered. "B-But I don't live around here, I actually live in the dorms at Seidou" Sawamura informs as Sanada helps him throw his trash away.

"You do? That's not far from here" Sanada asserts as he leads Sawamura out of the stadium. The vehement energy emanating from the stadium disperses the farther they get.

"It isn't, it's a nice bus ride actually" Sawamura says when they reach the bus stop. The unabating wind not holding back to make the trip painful to endure. Sawamura sneers at the fact of sitting out for nearly three hours in the cold, but he couldn't imagine how Sanada was holding up after pitching four innings and still had to move around after dropping him off.

"Really? Then at least something good comes out of this" Sanada sighs at his muscules constricting from another acute blast of wind.

Sawamura blinks up at the tall high schooler and nudges into him. "You'll also be riding with me." Sanada grins. "You're right. That's an additional plus to this" the pitcher bends down to give him a small jab at his side, careful to not tip him over. Sawamura feels his cheeks warm up.

"Y-You said I could be a pitcher with the type of body I have right?" Sawamura spoke up after a few seconds of silence.
Sanada looks down at him with an almost turmoil expression. His face soon softens up when aware of the question. "Yeah, why?" He asked with a growing smug look.

Sawamura looks down in a pit of defeat. "W-Well, I actually want to try pitching...it looks fun when you do it!"

Sanada stares at him with surprise. "Really? You want to try pitching?" He was baffled.

"Mhm, only if you teach me though. I know I won't be as good as you but it's worth a shot"

Sanada doesn't give it another thought when he agrees to it. "Gives me another reason to hang out with you more" He pinches the brunette's cheeks the second the bus pulls up in front of them.

Why did people have the habit to do that to him?

Sanada chuckles at his reaction and helps him on the bus. He pays the toll and seats them into a spot closest to the doors.

He allows for Sawamura to sit first. Fitting inside, Sanada sets the crutches next to him so they were not in the way.

"Thanks for taking me home, Sanada" Sawamura thanks him with a grateful smile as the bus departs. The silhouette of the pitcher's frame suddenly much more taller and muscular now that Sawamura was close beside him. "Well I rather take you home than a cold case spark" he chuckles softly. Sawamura laughs at that, and slouches in his seat for comfort.

"Hey, Eijun, has anyone told you you could pull off being a girl if you tried?" Sanada asked after sending a text to Raichi about his whereabouts. He glances at the first year, who was still trying to think over the drivel comment. How convenient he was thinking that earlier. But he wouldn't let that be known to Sanada. "You're the first, actually" he sniggers. But Sanada wasn't laughing.

Sawamura tensed up. "Wait, really? I have a girly look? Usually Haruuchi would get that comment, not me!" He shrieks as he twist a lock of his hair between his index and thumb. Sanada snorts at his remark, not bothering to question his friend that also would have been mistaken for a girl.

"You're funny, Eijun-wait, I can call you that right?" Sanada clarifies with solicitude. Sawamura chews at his lips, thankful for the amount consideration the player had to actually ask. Unlike some people. Timidly, Sawamura nods while glancing up at him. Sanada looks back down at him with an enfeeble but alluring countenance.

A stealthy hand snakes up to the top of Sawamura's head, finding serenity there. The brunette doesn't mind. Nor does he mind how close he is brought towards Sanada to rest up on him for the duration of the ride.

The warmth between them allocates. And their warm breathes heating at a particular area stirs coziness. The bus ride of small humps and short slopes envelops them into a pool of alleviation. Initially, Sawamura ends up falling asleep on Sanada, who is fighting the urge to not sleep so they do not miss the stop. It takes about fifteen more minutes till the bus pulls up at a stop located near the school.

Sanada stretches his aching joints before gently tapping at Sawamura's shoulders to wake him. The latter doesn't budge for a few seconds until the pitcher has the audacity to shake him awake. He didn't want to break him out of his short nap but he also didn't want Sawamura to miss his stop.

"Eijun, time to wake up" Sanada taps his face as he gets up from his seat. Slightly demented,
Sawamura forces his eyes to open. He accepts Sanada's hand and is pulled up onto his feet unfaltering. His tiredness vanquishing when his eyes meet with Sanada’s.

"We're here already?" Sawamura hears himself say as he is balanced and hangingn onto his crutches. Tipping over slightly, Sanada places his hands on his shoulders and helps Sawamura off of the bus.

"You awake enough to walk on your own?" Sanada asked with a sincere smile. His cheeks pink from the cold and his skin an ashy pale. Sawamura hums candidly, fixing himself on the sidewalk.

"Yeah," he dabs a fisted knuckle at his eyes to get rid of the tiredness. "Thanks, Sanada. Now, Promise me we'll go out again!" Sawamura proposes with a persistent glare.

Sanada chuckles at his tenacious personality. "Stubborn, Eijun, are we?" He grins.

"Only because I want us to be best friends!" Sawamura purses his lips, suddenly unrelenting; indefatigable. The wind blowing by nips at their skin, pinching whatever area laid exposed. Sawamura fights the urge to not warm himself so his crutches won't fall; he missed the warmth he had with Sanada.

"Best friends?" Sanada ponders from inside of the bus. "I'll hold you up to that, Eijun. Let's go out soon, okay?" He hops back onto the bus.

Sawamura nods at the agreement and waves fervidly as the bus drives off. He watches as Sanada waves back with an equal amount of vehemence. When the bus is out of sight he almost feels like a part of him drifted away.

The brunette returns to Seidou unseen, and for the rest of the day he is in his dorm fauxing the role of the ‘sick’ student. That included him changing out of his clothes and into something more comfortable. Sawamura finishes up some work in the meantime while watching a new anime the girls in his yearbook class recommended to him yesterday. Some debate that got him, the only guy, caught into a seemingly girls only topic. The girls didn't seem to mind, and actually, intentionally, forced a few suggestions on him. Sawamura hadn't realized it was three until he checked the time on his phone after a knock on the door enunciates.

Sawamura sets aside his things and hobbles onto the floor. He paces to the door and unlocks it to see Kuramochi alone. "Hey, lil bro" Kuramochi cackles as he allows himself in with some form of secret consent transmitted to him. He closes the door behind him and watches as Sawamura realistically wobbles back to his bed.

"Hey, Mochi-senpai!" Sawamura yelps, a wad of saliva choking at him. He coughs. Almost like he really was sick.

"Feeling better?" He asked as the shortstop sits himself down on the bed. He makes more room for himself by placing some of the first year’s things on the other side of the bed. Leaning over, Kuramochi places the back palm of his hand on Sawamura’s forehead for measurement.

Sawamura jumps at the coldness of Kuramochi’s hand and averts his eyes from the intense look his brother was giving him. "You're getting better!" Kuramochi sounded content with the results of eight hours.

He squints his eyes, scrutinizing more aspects of the brunette's body that may have stood out or been out of proportion. "You're really cold though, and your cheeks are red" Kuramochi points out, pinching the chubby area to prove his point.

Sawamura touches his own cheek. "They are?"
The shortstop nods. "No worries, want soup or anything?" He asked. He did take his role as Sawamura's older brother seriously.

But from eating the food Sanada brought him earlier, Sawamura couldn't find it in him to fit anything else into his stomach. "No, I'm not hungry" he declines the offer and stuffs himself into his blankets. He had finished his work so he saw no reason to be up anymore.

Kuramochi shrugs without a second thought. "Okay, if you need anything I'll be at practice"

Kuramochi jumps off the bed to leave, but pauses when he catches sight of the TV. He flinches, repeating the name of the anime when looking at the title screen. 'Love So Life'.

"Jun would be jealous if he found out you got your hands on this anime, he's been in our asses about getting it. But he never has time" Kuramochi snickers as he opens the door. "That's too bad, welp, see ya bro" he waves.

"Bye, Mochi-senpai" Sawamura's voice is muffled, but he was sure Kuramochi heard him. The door clicks shut, and a relative silence falls in place. The TV volume suddenly sounded lower, and all that could be heard--or what Sawamura heard--was the beating of his heart. He swallows, then looks around the room solemnly.

Sawamura decided to sleep. He could still feel the drowsiness of having to move around the stadium and watching the game. 'Maybe I should text Sanada before I sleep' Sawamura thought as he grabbed his phone. He pauses when an abrupt memory came crashing to mind.

"Sawamura is so annoying!"

"He talks too much"

"He is such a loser"

Sawamura felt his blood pumping in his ears. The comments of him years ago--even now--still remained in his mind. 'Or not...not unless he wants to text me' he puts his phone aside.

Grabbing the pillow, Sawamura clutches the item in hand at his chest. He squeezes, the tightening feeling similar to what his heart felt now. Constricted.

A heavy exhale leaves his lips. It hurts. A lot.

Scooting deeper into his blankets, Sawamura sinks himself under so he isn't seen then faces his body towards the wall. He didn't feel like being bothered or vice versa. Rethinking over what he has said and acted toward Sanada today starts to make him feel insecure. His self-esteem lowers; his confidence plummets.

"Ugh," Sawamura groans wistfully as he tightens his hold on the blankets.

"Why am I like this?" He shuts his eyes tightly.

"I'm so annoying."

The next few days were bitter and dark for Sawamura. He hadn't bothered to text Sanada out of fear, and talking seemed like a trait he didn't even carry. He was himself for the most part, in school and around the team and his own friends. But when he was alone he didn't know why he felt so...helpless. So diffident.
He tried not to feel so piteous and negative about the subject. It wasn't anybody's fault, not even Miyuki's, kudos to him. Sawamura knew why he was so down in the dumps. It was his past life.

Sawamura attempted to not let this get the best of him. It was just too difficult to deal with.

He had been constantly bullied when growing up. Immunity to the dirty comments were of none. No matter how long Sawamura had been bullied any comment directed towards him struck like lightening. Piercing a deeper wound the second time around.

"Eijun-kun, you doing okay?" Haruichi asked when seventh period rolled around. The sullen male dropped into his seat and pulled out his things. He shakes his head at the question. "Yeah, I am fine" Sawamura pipes, feigning content. Something he was good at.

Sawamura had been depressed long enough to master tricking people with his emotions.

He places his camera down on his desk and turned around to face Haruichi. "Why?" Sawamura almost screams like his normal self would. Haruichi chuckles at the brunette's euphoria, and digs his index into his friend's back. "You just look sad, is all" The pinklet admits, covering his mouth with the sleeve of his sweater.

Sawamura tries to not give into a frown. "Why would I be sad, Harucchi?" Sawamura turns back in his seat so that his now frowning lips weren't visible to his eyes and pulls out the SD card in his camera.

Haruichi shrugs. "I don't know"

"Then end of conversation" Sawamura snorts.

"Well, I am going to go edit my spread, come by if you need me" Haruichi taps Sawamura's back and heads to the back of the room to go do just that.

The brunette only nods, then greets Haruno with a welcoming smile when she takes her seat beside him. He watches from the corner of his eye as she pulls her personalized laptop out to edit her spread.

When Sawamura looks up he spots Furuya entering. Feeling somewhat degraded, Sawamura diverts his attention back to his camera.

If he had to be honest, Furuya was his rival. The guy was confident, helpful (believe it or not), funny, and had a good sense of style. He was also quiet but had lots of friends.

Something about his adept photography skills floated around school. Sawamura heard that Furuya edits posters for upcoming events for clubs and sports on a daily--to get people up to date. Even though Sawamura did the same thing, only for baseball, it felt demoralizing.

In spite of that, Furuya was someone Sawamura aspired to become.

"Hey, loser photographer" Furuya stoically greets the brunette when he passes by. Sawamura flinches in his seat. He forced himself back into character.

"Well maybe you're looking in a mirror!" He shot roughly, not even greeting him. His voice a bit shaky and hoarsed. Furuya gives him a look from his seat.

"Well then at least you wouldn't have to feel bad anymore" Furuya says, feigning sympathy. It was almost hard to tell if he did feel any indifference.
Sawamura rolls his eyes. "That makes two of us!" He randomly blurts, and returns to his work.

Suddenly he see's the outline of Furuya's body move over to him and looks over with a quizzical look. "You are the most sketchiest person ever! Furuya!" Sawamura hissed as he snaps his head down.

Furuya doesn't say anything. He moves closer to him, almost as if he was trying to whisper. "I saw you leave campus a few days ago" The sentence alone made Sawamura tensed. He tries to be subtle, but ends up peeking over at Furuya with a ridiculous look on his face.

Laughing it off would only be more awkward and suspicious. Digging a deeper hole wasn't an option; lying was out of the question.

Then he heard: "It's okay, I won't tell anyone if that's what you're worried about" he backs away from Sawamura with a promising look on his face.

The brunette's lips tightened. "O-Okay? Sure" his brows knit together in turmoil. "Thanks" he dryly says a few seconds later.

The two heads to the back to help Haruichi with his editing for the remainder of class. It was good for the most part. The time fly's by and soon school is over. The three grabs their things to leave, conviently being one the last few.

"Bye, Eijun-kun, see you tomorrow!" Haruichi waves.

The brunette waves back at them, and can only stare at Furuya. He didn't like the idea of his rival knowing he left school to meet up with Sanada even though he knew half of the story. But if he said that he wouldn't tell anyone then he guess he could stick with his word.

Sawamura stalks over to the Seidou Spirit Dorms.

It was a quiet afternoon. The guys hadn't really bothered him much that day other than Kuramochi checking up on him. Hell, even Miyuki hadn't done his routinely taunting.

Sawamura wasn't complaining.

After completing the few papers of homework he had, Sawamura took a shower before the washroom got crowded, then went back to his room and finished the rest of the anime series lent to him.

The next hour goes by lonely, giving time for Sawamura to wallow in self-pity. He thumps at the side of his temple as he propped himself upwards on his desk. He had now been keeping himself busy by watching baseball games. He wasn't into the sport or anything. But if he was spending his time surrounded by the players that enjoyed it most of the day than he might as well get familiar with the calls.

He spun in his chair, accidentally bumping his injured foot into the desk. "Ow, dammit!" He yelps in agony, gripping onto his thigh where the pain was augmenting to.

Sawamura clenches his teeth as he pushes himself off the chair. This felt worse than stubbing a toe.

A knock on the door resurfaces. "Ei!" Miyuki calls out on the other side.

"Go rot in a ditch~" Sawamura whistles, clicking his tongue with satisfaction as he heard Miyuki go
silent. He had still been wavering his feet to ease the pain in his leg.

"You are a very violent person, you know?" Miyuki chuckles from the other side.

Sawamura rose a bashful brow, as if Miyuki could actually see him.

"I learn from the best" Sawamura faux an innocent voice. He bats his lashes prolifically. He goes to open the door even though Miyuki was the last person he should let in.

He knew he was threatened to let Miyuki stay away from him, but Sawamura knew the bespectacled teen was too keen to pick out differences between the then and now. Sawamura couldn't have the guy snooping around like some detective.

"Why thank you" Miyuki smirks when the door opens.

Sawamura gives him a dirty glare that makes the catcher cackle.

"Not a compliment" Sawamura sneers bitterly.

Miyuki pushes himself through. Sawamura rolls his eyes and closes the door behind them. "What are you doing here? Don't you have practice or something?" The first year asked as he wobbles back to his chair.

Miyuki flickers his glances between the TV and Sawamura. "I could practice, but I wouldn't be me if I didn't come tease my favorite kouhai" the catcher evilly grins as he sits down on Sawamura's bed.

"You're right, that would be so out of character for you" Sawamura sarcastically remarks, wavering his hands around frantically.

"Damn right" Miyuki slyly grins.

"More importantly" Miyuki pauses when he looks back at the TV broadcasting a late game that took place a few months ago. "When did you become interested in baseball? I thought you weren't a sports person?" He finishes while crossing his arms over his chest.

Sawamura eyes the catcher warily. He gave it some thought before replying. "I-I'm not" he faces Miyuki who gave him a sanguine look. He seemed so irrefutable that Sawamura was not an athlete.

Ignoring the gaze Miyuki gave him, Sawamura turns back to watch the sport. "I am just trying to get use to it, I guess" he swallows thickly, his throat tight.

Miyuki continues to stare at him without answer. "How is it?" He asked when they watch the batter retire after three evident strikes. Both wondering how that guy made it with the pro's.

"It's too much for my brain capacity" Sawamura chuckles as he throws Miyuki the remote. "Feel free to watch whatever you want"

Miyuki lays the remote beside him. "Feeling free to do whatever I want isn't fun" he rolls his eyes over till they landed on Sawamura's lit up, neglected phone. A message came through. He smirks, grabs the phone and reads the message.

Sawamura spins in his chair out of boredom. Commercials had been playing now so he didn't know what to do. He yawns, then stretches, and eases himself into his chair. Sawamura's ears perk when he hears Miyuki clear his throat. He looks over at him and his eyes widen with alarm when he spots his phone in hand.
"Hey, Sawamura, this is Sanada. When do you think we should hang out-"

Without thinking, Sawamura bolts out of his chair and runs over to Miyuki and reaches for his phone. The catcher slams his hand into the brunette's face, keeping him from getting any closer to the device. He raises his hand that contained the phone and held it away at a far-reaching distance.

The catcher mischievously laughs. "I'm *jealous*, Ei. Who is this Sanada guy, eh?" Miyuki hums too softly that it almost is creepy. "Should I be concerned?"

Sawamura grips onto Miyuki's arm, trying to pry the limb off of him as he reached for his phone. "Give me my phone Miyuki!" The first year demands, disregarding the agonizing, harrowing pain puncturing his leg. They fall onto the bed, and Sawamura crawls over him to reach for his phone. Miyuki tugs down on his torso, requiring only little strength to bring him down to his chest.

"Sure, I'll just *hand* it to you with ease. Like hell I would. Tell me who Sanada is" he turns Sawamura over so that he is towering over the photographer. Miyuki sits on Sawamura's waist, holding him down while keeping a hand placed firmly on his flat chest.

Breathing suddenly became difficult. Oxygen was all of a sudden harder to obtain in the lungs with Miyuki's callus hand laying still on him.

"M-Miyuki" Sawamura whimpers cutely that Miyuki gives him a sharp look.

"You're so weak, Ei, are you even trying?" Miyuki goes through the phone to his messages inbox. "You really need a password by the way" he reprimands while keeping Sawamura down. He fidgets to move, but was still kept firmly in tact.

"I have a broken leg!" Sawamura shouts.

"Yeah but that's not an excuse for your arms to not move" Miyuki chuckles as he sends a reply as Sawamura's unwanted tribute.

"Miyuki!" Sawamura tries to wrestle the hand off him. He actually felt like he wanted to cry. Miyuki was always doing something to bother him and it was agitating.

When his phone beeps, Miyuki gives an iniquitous, vile look. Another message came through. It was worse knowing Sawamura was heedless of the message Miyuki did send.

"I miss you too! You're outfit was nice by the way, you looked like...a girl?!" Miyuki's jaw drops when he looks at Sawamura. "In that sweater" he finishes with a long pause following.

"Is there something I should know, Ei?" Miyuki keeps him in place with his palm. Secretly restricting air from insufficiently flowing to his lungs. Sawamura heaves a little.

"Ei" he calls him again, this time grabbing ahold of his chin. Eyes stayed fixated on him.

"Are you transge-"

"No- Kazuya! Get off of me!" Sawamura kicks him with his free leg.

Miyuki flinches at the action and jumps off of the male. He backs up, and held the phone up high.

"Give it back!" Sawamura fumes madly, cheeks flushed with embarrassment and fist clenched when he slithers off the bed.

Miyuki laughs. "You're kinda cute when you're mad, you know" the catcher winks at the first year.
"Kazuya give me my damn phone!" Sawamura launches forward. He jumps on Miyuki, who surprisingly catches him, and snakes a hand around his neck while wrapping his legs around his waist. Miyuki grunts while trying to hold Sawamura, simultaneously raising his hand to keep security of the phone.

"Tell me who Sanada is" he emphasizes in his lovey dovey tone when saying his name. Then he gasped. "Is he the guy you met with that night on your sex heist? It all makes sense!"

Sawamura pulls his head away from Miyuki, gaping at the accusation. "N-No! Stop making asinine jokes, Miyuki!" His face was red with indignation.

"I'm just putting two and two together, sweet cheeks" Miyuki laughs with mirth.

Sawamura's legs tightened around the catcher. His hand around his neck tightens as he reaches for his phone-- chest hovering in Miyuki's face.

The bespectacled teen looks up so he is watching Sawamura reach for his phone. He even went as far as standing on his tippy toes to make sure the phone wasn't taken. He feels the first year lift in his hold.

"Y-You're the worst!" Sawamura whines as he snatches Miyuki's hand, pulling him forward.

The catcher loses balance, stumbling forward a bit. Sawamura jumps, frightened, and relocates his arms around Miyuki's neck for his dear life.

The second year throws a protective arm around Sawamura's waist when he feels them go down, and twist his body over so that when they fell on the ground, it was Miyuki who landed on the floor with Sawamura on top. Immediate pain snipes throughout his leg.

His grip on Miyuki's chest for safety precautions, and Sawamura throws his head down in agony at the pain. "Ah, Miyuki, that hurts!" He pants heavily, glaring at the latter that had been still smiling at him, trying to swipe off the pain inflicted on his back.

He simply shrugs. Miyuki cheekily smiles so that his white teeth are visible. "You still haven't answered my question" he breathes out tiredly.

Sawamura opens his mouth to rebuttle, but was cut short when the door to his room opens. The two immediately froze. They look over at the door to see Kuramochi walking in. "Hey, Sawamura, do you wa-" he stops when taking in the sight of Sawamura on top of Miyuki.

A certain death was inexorable.

Then, Miyuki had the audacity to worsen the situation. "We're not done yet, close the door, cockblocker" he stuck his tongue out.

Sawamura shakes at this. "Idiot"

"Miyuki" Kuramochi's voice was murderous with venom. "Get your hands from around Sawamura, now" he demanded in a deep tone.

He sounded serious. When Miyuki obliges--reluctantly--Sawamura pulls away and takes the
opportunity to take his phone back.

Kuramochi closes his eyes for a moment to sink in the scene. "I'm just going to ignore whatever hectic relationship you two have going on" he sighs, mentally enervated.

Sawamura blushes but doesn't refute knowing now wasn't the time. He places himself on his bed and watches as Miyuki gets up from the floor and dust himself up.

"Well since I found you, Miyuki" The catcher looks up at the mention of his name. Their little intent staring contest made Sawamura feel nervous. He knew they disliked each other for many reasons but was it that bad?

Maybe he was reading too much into it, Sawamura tried not to. "Coach wants you to practice with Tanba and Kawakami for a few, to solidify their pitching" Kuramochi enlightens.

Miyuki nods without another word and turns to Sawamura with an impish smirk. He doesn't say anything, but before he could Kuramochi nudges into him to keep moving.

"Cockblocker, I swear" Miyuki cackles when the shortstop doesn't react. Sawamura could see the aggravation building in Kuramochi's face.

The door clicks shut, easing the tension.

"Did he hurt you?" Kuramochi asked moving forward to check his kouhai out. "I'm fine...Mochi-senpai" Sawamura heavily exhales. He was tired, and hot.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, please don't coddle me because you know me more than the others" Sawamura pleads.

Kuramochi stops at this. "Sawamura" he looks up at the brunette with glowering eyes.

"I told you before" Sawamura says as he steps back from his senpai. "Just because you know of my condition doesn't mean you have to worry about me" he scoffs.

Kuramochi places his hands on his shoulders. "I'm not worried about your condition, Sawamura. You're hurt and you fell. Something could have happened to your leg" He tries to reason.

The first year sighs. "Nothing happened, I promise" Sawamura calms himself. He fights a smile on his lips. "Thanks for caring"

Kuramochi's features softens. "Just be more careful. I don't want anything terrible happening to you" he pulls Sawamura into a tight hug, pressing his face into his chest. Sawamura hugs back, a hot tear rolling down his left eye.

"I'll always be here for you, okay? You can always come to me. You can talk with me" he continues to say in a soothing tone. "Anything you can't tell no one about, you can revert back to me, alright? I'm your big brother, and I promise I won't let anything or anybody hurt you" Kuramochi squeezes him in reassurance when he feels Sawamura's hot tears drip on his shirt.

He didn't know why he was crying. Sawamura felt frustrated, infuriated, and just sad. It made him glad he was close to Kuramochi like this.

"O-Okay, Mochi-senpai" Sawamura tightens his hold on the shortstop, never wanting to let go.

It felt weird.
Sawamura wasn't used to having someone who was this committed to looking out for him.

Chapter End Notes

Sometimes when I write these, even I get mad at Miyuki XD.

Again, Merry Christmas everyone!

Love you all!

And geez, sorry for any mistakes :/ don't kill me about it... teehee, it's fine!
The second game of the tournament approached rather quickly. Sawamura was disappointed when he discovered that he couldn't go when Takashima told him he had a doctor's appointment. It was fine with Sawamura, really. Depending on what the doctor says and how Sawamura feels in the end will determine if he wanted to watch the rest of the game when the appointment adjourns.

"Text me what the doctor says, okay?" Kuramochi says when the players are called to the bus. He is looking at Sawamura with a tender look. One he was familiar with. Kuramochi is putting his number in the phone concurrently.

The brunette nods. "Of course, you'll be the first person I text!" Sawamura beams as if he had already planned to do that. Kuramochi's lips falter into a smaller smile as he stares at his little brother. He plants a hand on his head and gives Sawamura's hair a little shake.

Sawamura feels his insides turn. His heart leaps and his legs wobble. For a moment, Sawamura was unsure if he was even properly breathing. Every time Kuramochi does this gesticulation it always make him feel so protected. "Don't worry about me during the game though. Focus on winning" Sawamura says still smiling. His cheeks plumped and eyes glimmering with optimism of their ineluctable victory.

The shortstop notoriously cackles, combing his hands through the first year's silky hair. They become tangled, but nothing bad that pulls at the scalp. He watches pass his hand as Sawamura's lips decamp from each other, opening his mouth to speak.

"If you're worried about me when you don't get a reply, just think about winning for me, and imagine my huge idiot smile when you do" Sawamura bounces hyperly, his lips widening up to his ears.

Kuramochi wholeheartedly grins, and excessively shakes his head with determination. "Hell yeah I will win for you!" He sniggers. Sawamura felt his lungs collapse at such an signature laugh echoing in his ears. Finishing off with a smile made him appear even more purposive.

Sawamura pulls him into a quick but benign hug. "Don't get cocky, big brother, Onii-san wouldn't approve of a new partner" the brunette reminds him and mimicks the inexorable chop on his head that Kuramochi still wasn't use to getting. He chuckles at the shortstop's reaction from how quick the brunette executed the action.

Kuramochi bites at the inside of his cheek. "You're right," he disregards the burning sensation in his cheeks as he looks at the younger male. The topic switches.

"Make sure you take your medicine" Kuramochi whispers inaudibly for those that might be around him. Sawamura nods at the obvious exception. Why wouldn't he take his medicine?
The temporary silence is short-lived when something heavy drops around Sawamura's neck. A heavy gasp departs from his throat, his face distorting into a twisted look of pain.

"Hello, partner in love affair crimes" Miyuki's voice is wrapped in the extortion for Sawamura's humiliation. Cadence slicked with a malicious tinge.

"Off of him" Kuramochi orders the bespectacled male. He lifts a hand to pull Sawamura away from the catcher, but in an instant, Sawamura is tugged behind Miyuki. He grins at Kuramochi's disgruntled look.

Sawamura couldn't find any proper words to say at the moment. He lets Miyuki do this to him, involuntarily accepting their entwined hands. The first year blushes when he notices, and tries to not pay it much mind.

"What if I wanted to talk with Ei? It's not fair that you get to hog him all the time" Miyuki says in a lovey dovey tone, sounding like a hopless romantic. He ignores the look Sawamura gives him when calling him by his nickname.

The shortstop purses his lips. "Cretins like you don't deserve to be around someone as innocent as Sawamura" Kuramochi snapped malvolently.

Miyuki chuckles at the comment. "Then why they hell are you around him?" He grins triumphantly at the look Kuramochi was giving him.

"I'm not arguing with a conceited asshole" Kuramochi grumbles as he looks around Miyuki to steal a look at Sawamura.

"I'm fine nothing like a little pain to the leg or anything!" He quips as he rips his hand away from Miyuki's.

He jabs Miyuki in the side when he heard him snicker at his pained statement. "I'm not telling you you're the absolute worst?" Sawamura brings up with daunting eyes.

Miyuki wickedly grins. "Only whenever you get the chance"

"Ah, so I stand by it" Sawamura rolls his eyes before hobbling over to Kuramochi.

"I realized, Sawamura, you're not wearing your crutches, do you not need them?" Kuramochi asked when the brunette sides beside him.

The first year shrugs. "I don't really need it" he admits with an honest look. Kuramochi and Miyuki eyeballed him, their eyes intently burning at his face. The first year blushes at the looks he was receiving and scratches at his temple. It was true. It's been a week now and the pain was alleviating it's way in some way whether it was the pills or not.

"You should bring them anyway," Kuramochi says with a wary facade. "Better safe than sorry" he adds with a pleading look at Sawamura. He was mentally begging Sawamura to do it so another incident doesn't occur and he needs his weight to be reinforced.

"Look at Kuramochi, brotherly instincts kicking in" Miyuki scoffs as the kindness. "I actually came over so we can leave, we can't be late" the catcher says while passing by to the bus.

"C'mon cockblocker" The two hears Miyuki say in the distance.

Kuramochi groans. "Sawamura you know everything I do concerning you is intentional, right? I
don't like Miyuki being around you for so long" The shortstop enlightens with a strained look. His skin is pale and his eyes are lightened with deprivation of energy to want to go against the catcher. Sawamura's brows knit together. It was the first he was hearing this, and the severity in Kuramochi's voice was what caught him off guard. He sounded almost like he was afraid of the guy. But that wasn't possible because there was nothing really thriller like about Miyuki--only the way he looks at you when trying to figure you out.

"Why do you say it like that?" Sawamura suddenly felt cold. The wind blows violently against them; Kuramochi needing to hold Sawamura down so he doesn't get swept off his feet.

The latter's hair is disheveled, and his face is contorted with anxiety. Kuramochi sighs, and averts his eyes in the direction Miyuki was heading. His figure tall in stature and intimidating with being a few feet away. Sawamura watches as Kuramochi's chest inflates with air, then descends as he exhales. He turns back, and Sawamura's head thumped with so much intensity at how fast Kuramochi turned around that he jumped.

"Miyuki...has been acting different lately" Kuramochi starts with worry seeping into his voice.

Sawamura raises a brow at the shortstop. "Different how?" He asked, feeling a bit uneasy at how serious the conversation was altering.

Kuramochi closes his eyes briefly to think--thinking of how to sum up everything. He sighs again. "I don't know how to say it...but when you say that Miyuki are two different people...kinda reflects from that" he vocalizes.

Sawamura was confused. "What does that mean?" The brunette emphasized with widen eyes.

What could be so bad about Miyuki that his own brother wouldn't tell him?

"Is it bad?" Sawamura asked, intervening in the silence that rendered by. Kuramochi makes a noise of frustration. The creases on his forehead was deepening and his nose twitched with lingering indignation.

"How about this" Kuramochi pauses, trying to formulate a negotiation. "I'll tell you when I am sure I am right, okay?"

Sawamura nods at this. Kuramochi pulls him in a tight hug. "Be safe" the shortstop takes off to the bus after that when being called over once more.

The brunette watches until he could no longer see Kuramochi before frowning. He was worried. Worried for him and for Miyuki. Whatever was wrong with the second year catcher really seemed to be affecting the shortstop.

Shaking his thoughts away, Sawamura walks limps over to Takashima's office, where she had been patiently waiting for him by finishing off some paper work.

"Sawamura? You ready?" Takashima asked when she spots the first year in the middle of the threshold. He nervously nods, still pondering over what was told to him. "Y-Yeah" he reluctantly answers. Talking seemed hard again.

"Okay, then" her voice echos in his ears when she stands. She grabs her things after signing off on a few more papers and applies her jacket over herself. Together, they make their way out of her office and to the cab that hadn't been waiting for them for long. Takashima lets Sawamura in the back while she helps herself to the front.
"So, how is your stay at Seidou so far?" Conversation commences when the car pulls away from campus. Sawamura really hadn't plan on talking the entire extent of the ride, but he knew in order to break the awkwardness of simply driving in silence had to be weakened somehow.

Squirming in his seats, Sawamura ignores all the things that didn't have to deal with the actual living conditions in the dorm. It sucked seeing Miyuki every day and it sucked that he could be an easy target for Daichi. But other than those two main components living there was the same as home. Except, without his mom or Wakana around.

"It's different" Sawamura answers as he looks out the window. The aligned buildings becoming nothing more than a blur. People he see for only a millisecond vanishes before he could check them out. "But it's better, in a way" he annexed. A small smile tugs at his lips at how much the guys treat him like they were his family. Though they could never replace his biological one.

Takashima hums with understanding. "We all want you to be comfortable while you are staying here" she says ardently.

Sawamura's heart swells. "Thanks" he picks his finger at his thigh to busy himself. He is staring at nothing in particular but his mind is aimlessly wandering.

When they reach the doctor's office, the ride of thirty minutes only seemed to be about ten to Sawamura. He hadn't realized they took a highway to another part of Kokubunji, nor all the turns it took to find the place. But it didn't matter. They were there.

"Thank you" Takashima says to the driver as she exits the cab. Sawamura does the same and helps himself out of the cab when his door opens.

The door slams shut behind him, and as the cab drives off the two makes their way into the building. Sawamura felt a bit nervous when he did enter. It was warm inside, which was a plus since it was windy outside. The room smelt of an average dental department except--a tinge of brewed coffee emanating from behind the registration counter. "Sit here, Sawamura" Takashima says in a low tone to not disturbed others here on a visit.

Finding an empty row of seats, Sawamura limps over to the second chair near the nightstand of magazines and takes a seat. It felt weird being in an actual doctor office for him. When he got hurt it was all normally in secret, naturally, coming here was never a concern of his.

If his family tended to find out about an injury they wouldn't think it was serious if he wasn't complaining about it. Which never happens. And it was rare they even found Sawamura hurt.

Sawamura's eyes peruse the sector of the waiting room. No one sick of any kind hung around--thankfully. A range of 6-25 year olds, or so it seemed, were the only ones getting the check up. Some had the same situation as him, and others seemed to go unknown to the eye. That was of no concern to him.

"Natoru" a nurse calls out the next name on the list. A wave of murmurs floods around, and the noisy ones look in search of the said person that happened to be next.

The lids of Sawamura's eyes fold over onto his eyes. His irises slowly cascading over to the little girl that had been walking in hand with her mom. She was sniffing copiously, wiping her palm over her nose.

Another guy was called over two minutes later, a more older guy with a shaggy beard and unkempt hair. He seemed to be contemplating his decisions as he walks in.
Then his eyes flew over to Takashima, who had still been waiting in line behind other people that were in the middle of registering whomever.

Slouching in his seat, Sawamura whips out his phone and contacts Kuramochi about the game. Hopefully, he would look at the message between innings.

As much as he wanted to not get his older brother in trouble, Sawamura really wanted to know what was going on in his absence. He would text the girls, but he didn't have any of their numbers.

In fact, Sawamura was speechless when he got a reply almost instantly. That should be a good sign, right?

"It's going well, no one has scored yet" Sawamura reads to himself. He eyes the message for a while, trying to decrypt whether he should be nervous about it or not.

Another message comes through, startling Sawamura out of his daze. "How about you? Had the doctor said anything about your leg?"

Sawamura felt a blush creep up to his cheeks at the question. He didn't know why, but he liked how Kuramochi cared about him so much. His focus was still on his leg even though he had a game to tend to.

A reply popping up in his head comes with ease. Sawamura informs Kuramochi that he is still in the waiting room. The next reply doesn't come as fast. And after three minutes, Sawamura could guess that Kuramochi had to return to the game.

He puts his phone up the same time his name is called.

But not by a nurse or by Takashima.

Sawamura looks to his left and could see a familiar figure walking out of the office with a grin laced on his lips. His eyes ever so brightened with passion and body dressed presentable even out of uniform.

"S-Sanada?" Elation blooms in Sawamura's eyes when he makes out the familiarity of the other male's physique.

Sanada had been wearing a black leather jacket above a white v-neck shirt, tight jeans hugging around his leg with white sneakers. His hair is styled the same as before. Seeing him out of uniform gave off a peculiar feeling. Even though Sawamura saw Sanada that one time out of uniform back at the drawings he was still use to him on the field.

Sawamura gets up with such vigilance to not hurt his leg more than it needs to, and wraps his arms around the guy's neck, face shoved into his chest. He was much warmer now compared to when he laid on him on the bus. They pull away to not attract suspicion towards them, and Sanada aids Sawamura back to his seat, taking a spot beside him for the moment being.

"What a convience seeing you here" Sanada chuckles at the comical arrangement.

Sawamura nods sheepishly, unable to contain his excitement. He was glad he wouldn't be here alone. But why Sanada was here was the more obvious question to ask.

"Y-Yeah, a doctor's office isn't exactly an ideal place to hang out" The joke causes them both to laugh. The second year looks down at the male with amusement, grabbing the first year's attention.
Sawamura's heart flutters when he scrutinizes Sanada's features. He looks down, not wanting to be accused for staring. His cheeks flared red with embarrassment that had been endearingly looking at each other. Like some scene from a movie.

"You're funny, Eijun" Sanada looks away to spare him any further underlying humiliation. He enjoyed the look Sawamura had given him.

Sawamura capitulates to the burning sensation his cheeks were threatening him with. He tried to not let the judgement deter him into thinking worse of it.

"T-Thanks" he mutters inarticulately. He feels Sanada adjust himself in his seat, self-consciously, brushing his coated arm over Sawamura's own. The brunette tries to not read too much into it and looks down at his lap.

His body was soaked in flames--he was sure of. His heart rate dramatically increased, hitting at his chest hard that Sawamura was sure the organ was going to break free at any moment.

He hears Sanada chuckle, and peeks over to see the guy staring at him. "Why do you get flustered so quickly?" He had asked.

Now Sawamura was sure he was going to die.

He tries to look for an answer, endlessly stammering. Sanada only chuckles harder, and secures an arm around his waist to pull the smaller guy closer to him. "S-Sanada, you do things to get me this way!" The first year blurts with loathsome at himself. He regrets saying that.

"Well that could be taken out of context" Sanada impishly snorts. He takes his hand from around Sawamura and lays it flat on the others thigh. "You like when I get you like huh?" He smirks wickedly, when their eyes meet, leaning in to his face closer.

Sawamura blushes madly, trying to not be the center of attention. He removes Sanada's hand from his thigh, but the guy only continues to do the oppisite. Then he has the audacity to place his hand higher than it originally was. The brunette felt like he was being dipped in a pot of boiling hot water.

Taken by surprise, Sawamura's hand shoots up and connects with Sanada's face, only grazing at his nose when the older male got ahold of his wrist.

"That's really bad of you, Eijun. You shouldn't be hitting people" Sanada sniggers uncontrollably. Sawamura bites down on his lips.

"It's okay, if something were to happen you're at the **perfect** place to get medical attention" Sawamura giggles cutely, encasing his smile behind his hand.

Sanada, still gripping at Sawamura's wrist, uses his other hand to jab him in the side, sparking a wonderful reaction. Fighting the laughter caught in his throat, Sawamura holds up a defenseless hand to surrender, but Sanada wasn't having it.

"S-Stop, we are in a doctor's office!" Sawamura hissed quietly so he wasn't as loud as he thought they sounded. If Takashima was sending him a glare to quiet down he was better off not knowing.

However, Sanada didn't seem to care. "You're fault for disrespecting me," He smiles in victorious. "You put this punishment upon yourself" he chokes back on a loud laugh when Sawamura begins to mutedly wheeze.

Tears prick at the corner of his eyes, and his face is entirely red.
"I'm sorry!" Sawamura fights back his boisterous laugh. But it failed. He was laughing and there was no stopping him.

The looks they had gotten weren't of anything bad either. Some smiled, others joked, and a teen even commented about them being 'cute'.

Sawamura was just thankful they hadn't attracted Takashima's attention. She made it to the front not long ago, and had been discoursing with the female at the front counter.

Fear of getting in trouble, he gets Sanada to finally stop, which he agrees with.

Together, they begin to collect themselves. Sawamura squirmed every now and then when he still felt little tingles at his sides. Supressing the urge to laugh was all the more fun to watch for the other male.

"See what you get yourself into?" Sanada says when he glances at the brunette. Sawamura gives him a dirty look.

"I will put you in a situation where a triage is needed" Sawamura threatens with a menacing glare. Though, his so called intimidating look falters when a smile breaks his face. There was no way this guy could ever be mean.

Sanada hums. "Then we'll both be in the same room together. At this rate, you'll die of laughter" he grabs at Sawamura's chin and turns his face so they are looking at each other. Sanada bends down, and pokes his lips out. "And I'll be next to you, badly bruised and beat up"

Sawamura nudges him, then his face lit up when remembering what he was going to ask. "Oh, Sanada, what are you doing here anyway?"

The question alerts the taller male. He sighs at the fact that their fun had been ruined by such a question. He didn't really seem to want to answer, but Sanada surrenders to the grounds of Sawamura being categorized in a group of the little few he trusted. "I guess I can tell you" he says with a shrug, not oppose to the idea of spilling his reason.

Sawamura sucks in a breath. "Y-You don't have to tell me.." He looks down at his lap. Knuckles clutched onto his black jeans.

Sanada shrugs. "Why not? We're friends aren't we?" He looks down the same time Sawamura looks up at him. The first year could of sworn he felt electricity bolt in his veins. "Wait-, best friends" he corrects himself.

Baffled, Sawamura felt his lips stretch when the phrase repeats itself in his head. He did mention about them being best friends, but he wasn't sure Sanda would actually accept it until they hung out more.

Sanada chuckles at how quiet Sawamura had gotten. "Y-Yeah, we're best friends" he shakes his head fervently. The thought of them being that closed made the first year happy.

Laying a hand on his shoulder, Sanada traces the outline of Sawamura's body up to his jawline. The hairs on the back of the brunette's neck stood still. Sawamura stars at him with his mouth open, unsure of what to say but enjoying the pleasurable feeling of Sanada's fingers touching him. Finishing probing the shorter male, Sanada's eyes leisurely trail down so that he was meeting Sawamura's golden ones.

They stare at each other for what seemed to be going on for forever.
Sawamura watches as Sanada's eyes slip down to his lips. He runs a shaky thumb over the plumped area, eliciting a slight burn from his touch. Sawamura's heart was going crazy. Why was he this way?

"Phew, I am finally done" Takashima sighs when she returns from the front desk. Sawamura and Sanada both looked up at her; the older male coolly swiping his arm from Sawamura's face, a bit relieved that she hadn't caught that.

Takashima takes notice of Sanada seconds after spotting Sawamura and smiles. He warmly returns the motion. "Hello, are you a friend of Sawamura's?" She asked still standing.

Sanada shakes his head as he pushes himself out of the seat to offer for her. "Yeah, but we were only catching up. Sorry if I cut in on something important" he promptly apologizes.

"It's no problem, I was just registering him in" she says while flailing a hand animatedly at him.

"Well then, it was nice running into you here, Eijun. Text me when you are done" Sanada waves to dismiss himself.

Sawamura felt sad that Sanada was leaving. He didn't want him to after they not only establish the fact that they were best friends but when he was going to tell him his reason for being at the doctor's.

Timidly, Sawamura waves goodbye at the jet haired male and watches as his body retreats to the exit.

"He seems sweet, is he an old friend of yours?" Takashima asked when she sat down at the seat respectively given to her. Sawamura restrains the urge to blush again.

"N-Not really an old friend" Sawamura starts as he steals a glance at the door when hearing a 'ding' noise going off, indicating entry or exit. He spots Sanada's body heading to the left, his hair flailing from the wind and hand shielding his eyes from the light. "He's my best friend that I recently met"

Takashima can only nod. "That's nice you're meeting new friends, does he go to Seidou?"

Sawamura shakes her head 'no'.

"Yakushi High" he tells.

Perplexed, Takashima repeats the name of the school under her breath. "Hm, never heard of it" she says as she pulls out her phone that had been ringing for a good few seconds.

While she gets up to handle the call outside, Sawamura pulls his phone out to message Sanada. He tells him how he was happy to have seen him today, and wishes they could go out soon enough when a game is not scheduled.

When a reply doesn't come right away, Sawamura turns his phone off. Several minutes pass by and patients alternate between going in and out.

By the time Takashima returned the waiting room was two times smaller as it was before. "Sorry, the coach was on the phone" she apologizes as she takes her seat.

Sawamura doesn't hold it up to her.

A full thirty minutes passed. Sawamura felt depressed knowing that as soon as the appointment was over, the game would have most likely ended by now; looking at the time.

He didn't want to tune in with Kuramochi to see how it was going, scared to recieve a bad response.
Sanada hadn't texted back either, which only decreased Sawamura's heightened hopes of a reply for the rest of the day. The brunette was sure that Sanada would reply as soon as he texted, but he could be busy with baseball just like any other player trying to win the tournament.

The first year turns his phone all the way off when he was sure he would get no reply.

"Sawamura Eijun" The nurse calls his name aloud.

The first year's nerves bolted at the sound of his name bouncing off the wall, and hesitantly stands when he was sure he was the only Sawamura Eijun in the room.

Takashima follows close behind as the two files in the door, sending the nurse welcoming smiles once they enter.

The nurse leads them to a room in the back. It was a small room with only a desk, two chairs, and a bed for the patient. "The doctor will be with you in a moment, he wants you to change into this, Sawamura" the nurse hands him a patient suit.

The brunette's face contorts in turmoil. "I change here?" He asked as he flickers his eyes between Takashima and the nurse, who gives him a look as if it was that obvious.

"Yes" she blatantly answers, faking a laugh to not be taken seriously.

"Oh" he strums as he looks back at Takashima. She gets the idea and grabs at a seat and sits herself in front of him so he had room to change in the back.

"You're just like all the other guys when they come here for serious injuries" She chuckles when the nurse lets them be. The door clicking shut echos in their ears.

Sawamura couldn't imagine that being true since most of the guys were pretty rock solid. He begins to take his shoes off first before doing anything else. "How?" The question comes out way spiteful than intended to be.

Silence engulfs between them. Takashima was recollecting her thoughts while Sawamura helped himself out of his clothes. He winces when he knocks his leg into the wooden pillar of the bed.

Mentally seething, Sawamura aids himself into his suit.

"Well, the first person I brought from the current team here was Jun," she laughs at mention of his name alone.

Strangely, Sawamura saw him ending here first from anyone else.

"He dislocated his arm after attempting to catch a home-run hit from Tetsu one day during practice" She tells.

"He jumped the fence on field A and right when he caught the ball he fell and landed right on his catching hand" Sawamura found that funny. Mostly because Jun would end up in the doctor's for something like that.

"When he found out he had to change into that suit he went berserk. It was a good thing we had Tetsu, because he is basically the only person that can hold Jun down

"But Jun ended up making Tetsu sprain his leg in the process, so they were both in here together. They changed...together" she says while holding two fingers.
Sawamura snorts. Jun was always the type to involuntarily drag Tetsu into things whether it was deliberate or not.

"Kominato ended up with a sprain leg and it took him thirty minutes to commit to just changing out of his clothes, then another thirty to decide to get in it. After a whole hour he actually began to change...I got food in the process"

Sawamura laughs at this. He didn't know the guys were so closed off from agreeing with anything not baseball. But then again these were try-hards that practiced approximately eight hours a day (or more) to improve in skill.

"Kuramochi was fine with it though," Takashima says, dragging Sawamura's attention even though she was looking at the wall in front of her.

He didn't think Kuramochi would end up here. But he was the intrepid leadoff hitter who stole bases with ease. If he was ending up anywhere medical wise, it was for stealing bases. It was the only legitimate reason Sawamura could come up with.

"It wasn't much of the outfit that bothered him" she continues while holding her hand over her mouth to prevent herself from laughing.

"But when he had to get a shot and needed blood to be drawn he freaked out. The coach was holding him down so that Kuramochi could get the injections" Takashima was wheezing by then.

Sawamura busted down laughing as well. Kuramochi was such a mean looking person that didn't seem to be afraid of needles.

Needles were actually something Sawamura never even considered he would be afraid of.

"Yeah...that took an hour also" Takashima sighs tiredly, as if she was reliving the days spent in one of these rooms.

By then Sawamura had finished changing.

"Was Miyuki ever here?" He asked curiously, after announcing he was done. He folds his clothes up in a neat bundle and puts them to the side.

"Not that I know of" she hums when she turns around. "But every now and then he jokes about being insane. I guess the pressure from the third years is finally getting to him" she grins.

Sawamura didn't know what he was interpreting that phrase much more differently the way it came out.

After resetting the seat and sitting in the back, the same doctor from that night in the barracks enters the room greeting them both.

He motions for Sawamura to sit on the bed, to which he quietly does so. "How has your leg been feeling, Sawamura?" The doctor asked when he grabs at his equipment. He applies gloves onto his bare hands and sits into his office chair.

Takashima looks at Sawamura with wonder.

"Better...when I take the medicine you prescribed" Sawamura answers seconds later.

The doctor makes a noise that confuses the brunette. He didn't know if that was a good sign or not.
"I see you don't have your crutches" the doctor says.

"Don't need them" Sawamura replies promptly.

Takashima gave him a look. "Where are they? And why not?" She interrogates him with a stern look. It was amazing how fast she could go from reminiscing fond memories to being a bloody war soldier.

Sawamura felt uneasy with the looks he was getting. He suddenly felt attacked. "They are in my room...they hold me back, and honestly my leg feels like it's getting better."

The doctor shakes his head at this. "Well, we still got to take an x-ray of your leg to ensure it's condition" he says matter of factly.

Groaning, Sawamura sulks in his spot. He knew he was going to miss the game taking place that day. That was a guarantee.

"Look on the bright side" Takashima grins at Sawamura's dispirited look when his eyes dart over to meet hers. "At least you're getting better" she sings while pressing a finger on each side of her cheek.

Sawamura groans louder. "That's fantastic! Glad to be here instead of taking pictures at the game" he spat with fauxed resentment.

Takashima hides a smile tracing her lips fittingly. "I'm glad there is some sort of devotion in that sentence"

"Grr.." Sawamura mutters.

Darkness percolates through the blinds of the window to touch at the floors. Inundating the room was nothing but pitch black.

That was all Sawamura could see when he awoke in his room that night from what was suppose to be a light nap.

Hehe, no. That turned into power sleeping. Sawamura couldn't even comprehend what happened when he left the hospital, unsure of how he even got in his room.

Yawning, Sawamura stretches his aching joints to clear of the tiredness riding in his body. He hadn't seen any of the guys after they left for their game and he wanted to be there for them.

When the soles of his feet converge with the fringes of the carpet, Sawamura takes a moment to flex his toes, grabbing ahold of some of the fringes in the process. He sat there for a moment to regain his energy.

After a good minute or two he stands, feeling the pressure on his leg augment. He heads to his dresser and pulls out the first cabinet, finding his painkillers and medicine beneath his many layers of shirts.

Taking the cup of pills, Sawamura eyes them for clearance than takes a pill out and swallows it whole without water, not feeling like doing any extra steps. It doesn't hurt as much as he thought it would.

When he is sure he is awake, Sawamura slips his home slippers on and puts on his puffy white sweater.
He leaves his room, then begins to make his way to the Seidou Spirit Cafeteria. It was much colder at night given the harsh temperature pricking at his skin and the whistle of the wind blowing that swishes against his ears.

Sawamura hugs his arms for warmth, wishing that it would just be summer already so the whether could warm up.

When approaching the cafeteria shouts fill his ears and the strident noise of wood rustling scares him. Sawamura swings the door open and enters the building.

Free of surveillance from the coaches and assistants and the girls heading to their rooms early caused the guys to make a ruckas for what?

Sawamura didn't know. He was still clueless. But given the way the guys energetically sounded as if they chugged down fifty pounds worth of sugar could only imply one thing about the outcome of the game.

The door clicks shut behind him, no heads turning still. Sawamura, intrigued, stalks over to the table grouped by many of the players. He frowns when he isn't able to see a thing, players of all strings accumulating by the second.

The first year steps back so he isn't hurt from the rush.

Then, he spots one of the players from the second string and taps him. "Hey, Haruuchi's doppelganger, what's going on?" The name somehow grabs the blonde's attention. He shoots Sawamura a look before saying, "The first stringers are hand wrestling. When a dispute erupts between them there are many ways to settle it for them. Tonight's choice...that" the blonde summarises with a small smile.

"Kind of amusing really" he adds as he diverts back to the crowd of amassed players.

Sawamura looks back as well but couldn't find what the guy was really looking at. "S-So, who is up?" The brunnete asked with interest.

"Go up and see" he simply tells.

Frowning at the transient response, Sawamura reluctantly walks around the table to find an entry. Shouting filters through his ears, and the atmosphere is humid with sweat and musk. His blurred vision that had not quite adjusted to the dimly lit room causes everything around him to spin. It was frightening in a way.

Sawamura wondered if this was what the guys generally did when he was sound asleep.

He finds a spot between two tall males and manages to squeeze through. When he fits himself in, Sawamura spots Jun and Kuramochi going at it. Right hands tightly binded together on the table with their arms as a pillar for support. The crowd is hollering for their chosen player, hooting out supportive calls as encouragement.

'Is this legal at this time an hour?' Sawamura thought with wonder as he looks at the two's growling eyes. Jun is clenching his teeth, free hand grabbed on the table to force Kuramochi's hand down. Sweat drips from his forehead. Tetsu was standing behind him, specifying clearly who he was rooting for.

On the other hand, Kuramochi's hair slung down with exhaustion, sticking to his forehead from the heat. His shirt clings to him and his sleeves are rolled up, exposing his muscles. His face is twisted
with many emotions as he tried his hardest to weigh Jun's hand down. Ryousuke stood closely behind with a cool compressor in hand.

Honestly, Sawamura wasn't even interested in how this all started. Yet, he was curious how this was going to end.

If he had to be even more frank, he was cheering for Kuramochi, mostly because he hears about his monstrous choke holds. Kuramochi was also the type of guy who wrestled, so he was an upper body person.

Jun was too given his built, but Sawamura was unaware of his kinks besides the fact that he enjoyed reading shoujo manga.

Sawamura continues to watch as the two tiredlessly prevail--trying to predominately claim themself as the victor.

"The ball you hit in the fifth inning was an error!" Jun shouted, incensed.

Kuramochi slams his free hand on the table in protest. It was loud enough that it scared those around him, even Sawamura. "To hell it was!"

"It's an error if it says it in the stat book you dumbass!" Jun rants.

"It's not an error if the ball sails over the white line while in play and still gets runners in!"

Oh.

Sawamura was way off. He thought this was how they settled arguments on a daily, but this was nothing more than baseball talk.

He laughs at his older brother's persistence to claim he didn't make an error. 'At least I know they won for sure' he sighs as he backs away from the crowd.

Sawamura turns to let them be, deciding to suspend himself back into his cozy room under his warm blankets. He would let Kuramochi know that his leg was fine tomorrow.

Sawamura leaves the cafeteria, unnoticed, and breaks to his dorm. He was hungry, but didn't want to break the commotion by asking for someone to heat his meal up.

Besides that...

Sawamura spots Miyuki bending down to pull an item from the vending machine. He is already frowning from what Kuramochi told him earlier.

What is wrong with Miyuki?

Is he ill or something and no one knows about it, or is it something bigger?

The sound of the leaves crunching under Sawamura's slippers alarms Miyuki. He doesn't react immensely to it as expected. "Ei" his lips curl up into it's familiar irksome smirk.

Sawamura tries to not pay it much mind. "Stop calling me that" he grumbles with annoyance.

Miyuki chuckles. "Of course not" he says tiredly as he scrutinizes the cold can in hand.

Sawamura looks at him, then at the juice, than at the vending machine. He hasn't remembered a time
he actually bought something from here and begins to take a look at his options.

A bag of chips came into view. He smiles. "Miyuki-senpai!" He screams, snatching the catcher's attention.

"I'm suddenly senpai now?" He remarks.

Sawamura ignores the comment. "I want that one!" The brunette points to the bag of chips he wanted.

"And?" Miyuki shrugs with little care.

"Buy it for me" Sawamura demands.

The catcher sends him a look. "The hell I look like to you, your banker?" He snorts.

Sawamura rolled his eyes. "Trust me I know a banker when I see one and you're not it" the first year spat malvolently.

Miyuki grins at the retort. "Gold digger, Ei? I never knew you were that type of person" he sniggers as he inserts the coins into the appropriate slot. He watches from the corner of his eye as Sawamura's face whitens.

"I am not like that! Stop doing that!" Sawamura whines.

"Doing what?" Miyuki feigned innocence as he looks back at the bag of chips to verify the code number.

He laughs when Sawamura groans in defeat. "You keep accusing me of liking or doing things that are not even true!" He fumes madly as he crossed his arms.

"That's your fault you say it. I am just telling you what I hear; making sure you hear yourself" Miyuki hovers his hand over the final number.

Sawamura grumbles incoherently under his breath. "What now?" Miyuki asked as pressed the last number, watching as the machine went for the bag of chips.

"I said, 'You take everything out of context like the jerk you are'" Sawamura repeats as he bends down to grab the treat. Grinning, Miyuki does the same, only faster, and snatches the snack before Sawamura could hear him.

"Miyuki!" Sawamura exclaims as he turns to the catcher and goes for his chips. But the second year raises his hand like he had done last time and plants his hand firmly on the other's shoulder to stop him.

"I never said I was buying you anything, what if I wanted it?" He enjoys the look Sawamura gives him. Instead of fighting back, Sawamura falls back flat on his feet, too tired to do anything about it.

"You're so mean, Miyuki" Sawamura says as he walks by to leave for his room. "Goodnight" he sneers with malice, stomach churning in hunger when he thought about how good those chips would have tasted in his mouth.

He was more glad that Miyuki was far to not hear his stomach eat him from the inside out.

Sawamura finds himself at his door in no time, then enters after twisting the knob open, remembering he left it unlock.
Before the door closes, Sawamura hears a thud. Instead of checking on it, Sawamura opens the door wider, allowing the being inside. "Why did you come here, you evil being?" Sawamura asked, aware it was Miyuki he was talking to.

The lights go on, and Sawamura turns his TV on to watch whatever of his interest.

He turns back to face Miyuki, who had closed the door behind him, locking it, and sits on the bed. "Because I am not as evil as you think I am" he throws the bag of chips over to the brunette.

Sawamura doesn't catch it, a disappointing sight for the baseball player.

"And because whatever crap that is going on in the cafeteria will eventually lead into the aftermath taking place in my room, and since you're the only person other than me with a single room..." Miyuki stretches out on the bed, hoping Sawamura got the gist.

Sawamura blinks mindlessly at him. "Your point?" He tilts his head. Avoiding the fact that he does get where this was heading.

Miyuki clicks his tongue. "I'm camping here for the time being!" He announce with content.

"Absolutely not!" Sawamura exclaims in protest.

Miyuki lays down on the bed, and Sawamura stalks over to move him. He grabs at Miyuki's body to remove him from his bed.

Only thing was...Miyuki was heavy as hell.

"What the heck do you do all day!? Eat stone?" Sawamura whines as he relocates his hands at Miyuki's arm to pull him off easier. It still doesn't work and it's all the more mocking when Sawamura finds Miyuki fake sleeping.

"Don't go to sleep on me!"

Sawamura hits Miyuki at his back to wake him.

"You're such a bad roommate you know? I'm glad we don't share rooms" Miyuki muffles as he turns over to avoid the light and also Sawamura.

The young brunette narrows his eyes. "That makes two of us!" Sawamura argues.

Miyuki still doesn't move.

Finding it useless to do anything about the immobile male, Sawamura leaves him, and snatches the bag of chips from the floor to eat as compensation for his stay.

Sawamura still didn't like that Miyuki barged his way into his room, but given how tired he sounded and how much he loathe the guys invading his room, the brunette decided he do at least one act of kindness.

Besides, it's not like he could move Miyuki to begin with.

Sawamura turns the lights off, then grabs the extra pillow and blanket Miyuki had not been occupying under his body. It was incredible how fast he fell asleep.

Being nice, Sawamura begrudgingly pulls Miyuki's glasses off his face so the arms don't widen, and folds them onto his desk.
Subsequently, Sawamura pulls the blankets on him properly so that he isn't cold. He didn't have a warmer in his room so at least he had something warm to sleep in so his inevitable freezing death was prevented.

Sawamura makes a small provisional bed from the few blankets and the one pillow he had. He settles onto the floor when he grabs his laptop and begins to work on different covers for a spread.

He decided to at least have something to work with while in class so that his teacher doesn't think he is indolently stalling. In the interim, the TV played a role as background sound.

Because he had slept for almost the aggregated sum of the day, staying up was nothing challenging.

As the night continued, Sawamura was surprised when he learned that Sanada texted him about thirty minutes ago. His blood cooled when he read over the message. "Sorry my phone had been left in my room dead the whole day!" Sawamura understood very well.

He replied with acceptance, not that perturbed by the happening.

Sawamura continues on with his spread like so, replying whenever he remembered he was talking to Sanada. Apparently, he had a project due for one of his classes and was now starting.

Sucked for him, Sawamura was only up because he wanted to be. "You should have done it when you had the chance :p" the first year replies while silently chuckling.

The two talked for about two more hours. Sawamura had long put his laptop up to talk with Sanada when he basically begged him to not leave him alone doing his project.

Eventually they ended up facetimeing. But Sawamura was sure to keep the volume down to not disturb Miyuki. There were several occurrences where he would forget that the tanuki was even there.

"Thanks for staying with me Eijun, you're the best" Sanada says through the phone. They both had their phones leaning propped up so they weren't holding their phones all night.

Sawamura laid there on his pillow watching as Sanada did his project. One of his roommates had been up along with him playing video games.

"Yeah yeah" Sawamura shrugs tiredly. He was more tired than he thought he was when he yawns into his arm.

He hears Sanada chuckle, and it's just as captivating as it is over the phone like in person. Sawamura stretches a hum, then yawns again.

"Tired? You can sleep" Sanada says after gluing some kind of paper to a circular looking object. "Nah, I have nothing important to be awake for"

"You sure? Don't be blaming me that you fell asleep in class"

Sawamura stuck his tongue out. "Whatever, so when do you want to hang out again?" The first year changes the topic.

"Your choice. I'll pay" the brunette blushes at the request. "You don't always have to pay for me, S-Sanada" Sawamura stammers nervously.

"Just tell me Eijun, you're not doing yourself justice by staying silent" he chuckles impishly. Sawamura feels his stomach do a somersault at the mention of his first name.
He didn't know why, but even though other people calls him Eijun; when Sanada does it sounds much different.

Sawamura starts to ponder, swallowing a lump in his throat as he goes through his options. He tries not to think of anything expensive, which cancels out a few of his choices and leaves him with a typical list of ideas any other person would say.

"W-Well, do you want to go to the batting cages so you can teach me to pitch?"

Sanada almost stops moving at the choice. He shrugs. "Sure! I'll bring my things so you can practice"

Sawamura smiles at the thought. "Yay! Sanada will be helping me pitch!" The brunette squeeks with enthusiasm. He forfeits another squeal from leaving his lips when he hears Miyuki twist in the bed.

"Mhm, if you don't kill me by then"

Sawamura frowns. "Why would I kill you?" He smuggles a small laugh from his throat. He lays down on his arms when he feels the fatigue catching up to him.

"From cuteness" He jokes in a way that almost made him sound serious. Sawamura musters a faint chuckle. "Cuteness?" The brunette repeats as his eyes seal shut.

He hears Sanada hum a noise.

"Yeah, you're cuteness,"

"Are you saying I am cute, Sanada?" Sawamura smiles with his eyes still shut.

Silence.

"What?" Sawamura plays along.

Sanada sniggers and turns back to his project. "Yeah...you're cute, for a guy"

Sawamura was half awake now. He turns over in his makeshift bed and noticed that even though Sanada had a specific view of him, he was still concentrated on finishing his project. At least he couldn't see his reaction.

"I am?" Sawamura whistles with burning cheeks. "Is it because I look like a girl that one time?"

He watched with amusement as Sanada froze on camera. He was perfectly still that Sawamura thought his phone was the one freezing instead.

Until he finally spoke. "I said you could pull it off"

"I got you" Sawamura chuckles. "I'll talk to you later okay? I am tired. Goodnight, Sanada!" He waves fervently at the camera. Sanada says his goodbye as well and shuts his phone off.

Sawamura couldn't sleep for the remainder of the night. Even though he got to sleep for a good five more hours, Sawamura was largely thinking about what Sanada said about him. It made him feel good about the way he looked.

That was just what he needed to stay sane. Someone like Sanada in his life.

When Sawamura awoke the next morning he was in his bed. He felt the softness of his mattress and not the back-aching harden floor. However, he still felt pain from sleeping halfway through the night.
When the brunette scans the room, he realizes that Miyuki is gone. That's what was missing. The room was cleaner than it was before; his computer is on the desk and his bed is tidied up.

Getting up from his bed, Sawamura begins to hastily change into his school uniform for the day. He brought his phone with him to school, which he rarely does, and heads to meet up with the others.

He meets the guys in the caferteria, a natural place to hang around before class started. "Morning!" Sawamura greets the regulars from the first string when he enters the cafeteria.

Kawakami and Kuramochi are the first to greet the euphoric male. Sawamura takes place beside his brother when he greets the other regulars. "Aren't you smiley today?" Kawakami says with an ardent laugh as he hands over his headphones to Shirasu.

"I am? Aren't I always smiley?" Sawamura asked with his head cocked to the right. His already fervid grin increasing with each passing second.

Kawakami shakes his head with a solid 'no'. "You haven't been recently, but now it's creepy."

"The hell, are you high?" Kuramochi remarks impishly as he jerks his head to meet with Sawamura's staggering gaze. The first year laughs at the statement, all the more to assume that he was.

Sawamura stops, however, when the harden looks doesn't falter. "I'm not!" He held his hands up in defense.

"It's okay, I believe you" Kawakami says with a raised hand.

"Don't believe him, sometimes Kawakami can be really frank and tell you to your very face that you are dumb, and you won't even realize it" A passing Tanba shoots with a tray of food in his hand.

Sawamura gives Kawakami a skeptical look. "Okay, that was true" the sidearm pitcher admittedly lets known with a sip of the orange juice he had sitting beside his arm.

He reverts back to Shirasu in their own little conversation about the new song recommendation. "So, why are you so happy?" Kuramochi emphasized when he scoots closer to his young brother. He snipes an arm around the brunette's neck, and stares at him, riveted by the withering idea that something may be up with him.

Sawamura could already feel his cheeks heat up, and not even because the thought of why came to mind. It was more because he knew he would let Kuramochi know before anyone else.

Scooting closer to the second year, Sawamura leans in and whispers to him, "I made a new friend" he giggles as he watches Kuramochi's face fold.

"Really? That's cool" he ruffles the latter's hair. "Are they in your grade?" He asked next.

"No" says Sawamura with glowing cheeks.

Kuramochi's face twisted with surprise. "Second year?" The shortstop guessed. Sawamura grins harder. "Yeah, but he doesn't go to this school"

"Oh, he?" The title of gender stuck out more than anything. Sawamura blinks at his brother as he nods. "Yeah, why?" The first year asked.

Kuramochi shrugs. "If it was another girl friend of yours and she was insanely cute like Wakana, I
was going to put you in a choke h-

The shortstop freezes when pain resurfaces at the top center of his head. He winces, and glares at the contemptuous third year that had silenced him for a good minute.

"You were going to do what to our precious photographer?" The pinklet asked as he placed a hand on his partner's shoulder. Kuramochi tenses at his touch. Even though he was slightly taller than Kominato, the second baseman was looking really elevated about now.

Being towered wasn't something Kuramochi wasn't a fan of, but he made an exception when it came to the first half of the keystone combo.

"Nothing, Ryou-san, why would I do anything to Sawamura?" Kuramochi nervously laughs as he lays an arm around the said male.

Sawamura could understand his brother's scattered nerves about now. Looking at Ryousuke now, the guy looked like a damn skyscraper compared to them. And he was only a few feet higher with them sitting.

The second baseman hums. "That's what I thought, I could of sworn my mind was playing tricks on me" he ridicules with a soft chuckle.

To ease the tension, Kuramochi says, "W-Want me to walk you to class?" and is already getting out of his seat before a response was given.

Sawamura could only imagine how terrified the shortstop must be.

"Hm, sure why not" The third year shrugs mindlessly and exits the cafeteria with Kuramochi in tow.

"Is Onii-san that scary?" Sawamura asked with widen eyes as he glances at the time on his phone. He should be meeting up with Haruichi and the others soon.

Kawakami shakes his head with a definite yes, while Shirasu replies with, "You'll get use to him being like that shortly" then the two second years walk off so they are not late for class.

Sawamura leaves behind the rest of the third years, a bit disappointed he had no one to walk with to the building. He was a bit shocked when he didn't find Miyuki that morning waiting to annoy the hell out of him.

That was a moment Sawamura mentally praised, and only hoped that Miyuki would continue with whatever he was doing to stay away from him.

When Sawamura came to the first year floor, he spots Haruichi and Furuya right away and sprints over to them. "Hey, guys!" He greets his friends loudly that they got a fee weird looks.

Furuya eyes him suspiciously while Haruichi hides his red cheeks.

"Eijun-kun, you're so loud" Haruichi tells him, signaling him to lower his voice.

"Yeah, stop" Furuya demands in his ever so impassive tone.

Sawamura slouches over. "I can never be happy around you guys" he whines. "No, you can be happy" Haruichi says with a small smile.

"Just not loud" Furuya remarks.
Sawamura rolls his eyes as the bell rings. "Whatever, I will see you two soon, okay?"

"Yep" Haruichi agrees.

They depart from each other and head to their classes. For the rest of the day Sawamura is smiling and giggling more. Whenever he gets the chance, he sneaks a message behind his teacher's back to Sanada. Most of their conversations dealt with threatening each other in humorous ways. Sawamura tries to not laugh while in class, but half the time he couldn't help himself. He receives a few looks from his fellow classmates but he only ignores them and continues on with his business.

If Sawamura was not texting or reading messages, he was thinking about Sanada. He wasn't obsess with him or anything, but it was hard to keep him off his mind when Sanada did a lot of things to trigger him.

Sanada would call him beautiful and cute, comment on how funny he was and how his personality was peculiar but nice at the same time; over all, Sanada seemed to be enjoying having Sawamura as company.

The thought made Sawamura gush in exultation. He was mostly excited to go out with Sanada again for real this time.

The rest of the day goes on smoothly aside from classes. During lunch when his friends were all talking with each other, Sawamura had been texting Sanada the entire time. His friends don't question him who is on the phone, but they do notice how much time the brunette was spending on the device. No one stops him though since Sawamura was still himself away from the phone.

But one person didn't seem to be liking how mushy Sawamura got on his phone. The pink cheeks. The sparkling eyes. The huge smile on his face.

Aggravating.

It was a horrendous sight.

Daichi didn't like it one bit. Which left him planning a million ways to get Sawamura's attention. Even if he had to break his phone and torment him to death to figure out why he was acting weird.
Masked, aka, everyone has a different side to them

Chapter Summary

Karma always knows when to be the stick in Sawamura's ass. Only thing is he doesn't know what he does to deserve it.

Everyone wears a mask, how solid and glued it is on their face determines how long it will take to see the real them.

In which, Sawamura has seen different sides of Miyuki but doesn't know what side of him is the real Miyuki.

Chapter Notes

This has got to be the longest chapter I have ever made (about 16,000 words), and that's because with school starting back up ( :/ ) I'd figured I leave you guys with a gift when my schedule starts to get hectic from here on out...again...sigh. Anyways I also thought that I would fix any mistakes when the story is completed. I do preview but I always reread the chapter about two times and still end up missing like five or so errors (idk why...) But I trust you guys are patient! Anyway, enjoy the chapter!

I've been having a good day so I hope I made your day by uploading!! Thanks to all the people that are really happy about me updating. Warms my heart :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

A streak of good days with no such trouble in sight? Sawamura thought he had actually lost it. Stuck in an endless dream where such excrescence like bad luck was of nothing. Aside from school, working with the baseball spread hasn't been easier with the new light shimmering around the first year. It was odd at first. Things normally don't go Sawamura's way unless the universe plans to annihilate him in some way that will have him mentally or physically hijacked.

He doesn't want to jinx it though, and continues on with his good luck streak throughout the days.

Sawamura met up with Sanada a few times for the days accounted. Sometimes Raichi was with him, but other times he wasn't. But when he was included, they were all hanging out usually in the arcade or at the park eating ice cream together. Kuramochi was quite fine with it as long as Sawamura was careful and returned to the dorms before curfew--to which, Sawamura followed accordingly, though he never got to ask who Sawamura was meeting up with.

When he was alone with Sanada, they were doing many things, such as, going to the mall, restaurants, hanging around at his dorm even though students from other schools weren't allowed; walking around the city, and working on Sawamura's pitching, which he hadn't got the hang of yet.

Other than hanging with Sanada, Sawamura had been occupied in pasting more advertising posters so that more of their students could come to the games. They had been becoming a big success so it
was only natural he kept going.

Even though Sawamura had been given all of this...time, he was still a bit apprehensive about his surroundings. He hasn't seen Miyuki ever since he slept over, and when he arrived at practice Sawamura either just missed him, or nothing was said between them.

Now that it was brought to his attention, Sawamura noticed that Miyuki was acting strange all of a sudden. One minute he is his normal self-conceited self; making inevitable remarks and pulling anything out of context to tease the first year.

But if he wasn't, Miyuki was an absolute introvert. He would remain quiet during practice, not eat with anyone during dinner, and often left to his room a lot more earlier than he usually did when Sawamura was in the weightlifting room with the others.

At first, Sawamura didn't want to assume the worst and lets it be. But then it started to become a continuous thing. An eerie feeling resonated around the second year catcher, making him appear even more sketchier than usual.

Sawamura had been meaning to ask Miyuki what was wrong, but he never had the chance when other things magically pops up in his face, and cause he doesn't see the latter as often as he thought he did around school.

Miyuki wasn't someone Sawamura would typically be concerned about on a daily, but it only seemed to be him and Kuramochi who realizes the change in...personalities.

It wasn't just him either.

The same subject applied to Daichi as well. Whenever Sawamura entered class the guy was staring menacingly at him, as if daring him to do something to tick him off in that very instant. He would seem in deep cogitation, musing over whatever that had him like that in the first place.

Sometimes Daichi wouldn't even disrupt the class and would walk out whenever he felt like it. And whenever he did that, it was because he had to be mad.

His little fits would honestly scare Sawamura.

Daichi's eyes would be a darker shade, the creases on his forehead seemed enlarged; bigger than his own brows, and his lips would contract with petulance that Sawamura was sure his face was going to tear any second. He doesn't miss the way Daichi's body would flinch uncomfortably whenever he spoke during class to answer a question, and how he scratches at his knuckles, that seemed to be bloody to Sawamura the harder he squinted his eyes.

Therefore, whatever was the reason to get him like that caused Sawamura to stir out of his way when he caught sight of him in the halls, during lunch, or when he was heading somewhere with his friends, like the library.

And ever since that incident where Daichi legitimately came to the dorms that one time, Sawamura had kinda been afraid to walk out at night.

So he hadn't really been seeing him around much lately. Which was a miracle in disguise when he got by his first full day without any subjective backlash, aka Miyuki's teasing; constant beatings, and fear of the outside world.

Sawamura had pretty much been relaxing the last few days. Everything had just been going perfectly in his favor.
Until one morning when the day started out quite roughly. Sawamura managed to oversleep since he spent the night in Kuramochi and Masuko’s room that night playing video games. He had been feeling a bit lonely and decided that it was their turns to pay their toll since he was their photographer and all.

The upperclassmen largely didn't mind overall. They had given him the free bed beneath Kuramochi’s as a token for his work whenever he felt like coming over. They were the only two living together in the dorms so it made sense to have more unaccompanied beds.

Sawamura quickly changed out of his night clothes and into his uniform. He hadn't exactly been washing his clothes with the work he was kept up with, so he ended up borrowing a freshly clean shirt from Kuramochi, to which he knew the second year wouldn't mind at all.

He throws the shirt on and uses an extra spare of pants he had found in his own room after running back to check so he wouldn't use up all of his brother's clothes.

After putting his shoes on and everything, Sawamura grabbed his bags and went to class. He hadn't been worried about being late most of the time since he was on good terms with his teachers. But this morning was something else.

The teacher hadn't been in the mood for any shenanigans while in the middle of a vital lesson. To Sawamura's dismay, the class was given a project to do for the next three weeks before the first semester was over.

A project was fine and all. Sawamura would consider doing a project any day other than a standardized handwritten test. He saw no incredulity to not being able to do the assigned project.

Sawamura begins to head to his seat when he is given all of the information about the project from the teacher. It did require a lot of research and time for the need of three weeks, but nothing Sawamura couldn't handle.

"Oh, and Sawamura" The teacher pauses when the first year stops short of the isle containing his seat. He meets with his teacher's intense gaze, who was holding a finger up as if saying 'also' while scrutinizing the paper in front of him.

Sawamura does a full body turn so he was letting the teacher know he was all ears. "This is a group project" the brunette falls stiff under the statement. Since when did working with other people determine the most important grade of the year?

His attributes falls somberly. "Oh, um..." Sawamura didn't really know how to respond to that other than to listen to anything else the teacher had to say.

"You should be lucky actually," he almost laughs as he checks the paper before finishing, "that Daichi has volunteered to team up with you in the absence of pairings earlier."

Sawamura could of sworn the weight on his shoulders drastically increased. His blood hardens into stone, making it hard for him to breathe, let alone, walk.

The hairs on the back of his neck stood erect and his legs wobbles weakly. But he doesn't allow the vulnerability to mask itself onto his body.

Sawamura only stood still, unsure of what to say. Should he turn back to Daichi and thank him as if they had completely nothing going on between each other? Or just walk to his seat?

His stomach does a big flop, and even though he hadn't eaten breakfast that morning, it felt like any
acidic substances lurking in his stomach would find it's way out of his system regardless if it was meant to go or not.

Without saying anything, the teacher continues on further. "Daichi is a good student. I don't know if you two associate or not, but his grades are splendid even though he messes around too much. I think you two will get along impeccably" he says as if Daichi was the most phenomenal student he ever had.

If he could, Sawamura would of laughed at the teacher's face in objection of how easily manipulated he was fooled into believing that Daichi of all people was a good student. The sentence alone was hard to believe. But he valued his life and didn't want to suffer any critical beatings that might have him in the hospital in seconds.

Instead, Sawamura forces a sweet smile on his face and turns to head back to his seat in the back of the class. The other students had been grouped already, working together as such to complete their work.

As expected, Daichi was sitting in the seat beside him with one of the school's computers on his desk and a few disorganized papers adjacent to the device. The bulky teen simulates a sickening cordial smile when he is sure the teacher is looking straight at them. Sawamura feebly does the same, chewing on his lip as he sits in his seat.

Slowly, the brunette pulls his bag from off his shoulder and ferrets for some paper and a pen. He goes as slow as he can possible so he avoids more time spent actually talking with the haughty male.

Sawamura sets his materials down on his desk when he is sure he has everything, but jumps when an object flashes in front of his face. It was a textbook.

"We need cited references, so I figured you could look through the book while I did the research" Daichi talks calmly; imperturbable. Sawamura's eyes flicker to the book that had been carefully placed on his desk with such delicacy.

His movements felt like a mockery to Sawamura. Daichi was toying with him-- Sawamura knew he was too. Pretending as if he was an actual good student almost had the brunette paranoid.

When Daichi moves the computer between them for Sawamura to see, he accidentally flinches, and to his peculiarity, Daichi gave him a weird look as if the brunette was going crazy.

Sawamura stares at him apologetically as he leans closer to see the screen. Daichi only chuckles. "You're funny, Eijun" he sighs as he clicks to the next tab to show him his work that he had been typing up from sources online.

Together, their project largely focused on the greek mythology of Thesus. Like any English project, they had to break down the life of the mythical character and how his name originated and more on. So far, Daichi had the beginning script, that being his date of birth and the prestigious title of the son of Poseidon. But all out of place.

Afraid to say anything that might result in broken bones, Sawamura forces a smile on his face and utters, "T-That's a n-nice start," and flips the textbook open.

Daichi shakes his head than reaches over to grab at the notes he took. Sawamura was glad he didn't see the little jump he did when his back turned.

"These are the notes I took" Sawamura takes the papers from him to preview, his hands shaky and clammy. He reads over them steadily, trying to avoid the burning sensation brimming at the side of
his head from Daichi’s sinister glare. The brunette could of sworn he heard Daichi mutter something, but chooses to ignore that as well.

He focuses on the papers in front of him, taking note of the well written statements that had just about everything considering Thesus imprinted. There didn't seem to be anything out of place either.

"We also need to incorporate a powerpoint retaining the information on our coverup” he adds begrudgingly, as if he was actually going to put in effort to do the work. Maybe if Sawamura could play his cards right, he could influence Daichi to put in work without having them meet up in the duration of three long weeks. Because that wasn't going to happen. Them meeting up just meant a free beating to the face even if Sawamura typed the wrong word or gave a bad suggestion. He didn't plan on giving him any openings.

"W-Well, um, how about after you finish typing our coverup, I can make the PowerPoint and anything that could score us an A?” Sawamura proposes as he peeked over at the bigger brunette. His emerald green eyes dampened with disinterest as he averts his eyes from the computer to the smaller teen.

The side of his lip twitches, causing Sawamura to gulp. Maybe it wasn't a good idea. "Sure” he mutters bitterly as he hunches back in his seat.

Sawamura frowns but doesn't say anything to resolve the problem. For the rest of the time being the two very thinly communicates. Most of their energy being put into their project. To Sawamura, that had to be the most painful forty minutes of his life. He tried to get as much as he could done so that not only would that leave a few off his plate so he could focus on gathering his two assigned spreads, but so that they wouldn't have to meet up at all after this. He was honestly fine with spending the unendurable full hour being with Daichi to talk about the project, but only because he knew he wasn't able to get hurt while they were in class with other students.

But to Daichi, this was just another mind game of torture for him to mess around with Sawamura.

When the bell rings, relief courses through Sawamura's veins. He takes his things and neatly thrust them into his bag. But as he stands and starts to initiate a step, he feels a slight tug on his bag. He is pulled back and turns around so he is facing Daichi, who was towering over him with a new look on his face. So he wouldn't stumble back, Daichi held Sawamura firmly and glared at him intently. "Is that a problem?” He asked with an askewed look that he seemed like a psychotic mental person.
"N-Not at all" Sawamura stutters an answer quickly as he hides his face behind the folder.

Daichi grins, then lays a hand on the brunette's head and ruffles his hair. "Good boy" he brushes by with that being said, and calls out his friends awaiting his arrival at the front of class.

Sawamura felt like his soul left his body as he stood there trying to regain his posture.

He hated that he was being stepped on so easily. He hated that he couldn't defend himself and had to watch from the sidelines as things go right for others. Sawamura knew he was a pushover--a door mat for people to wipe the dirt beneath their steps on him. It hurts...it all does, but what could Sawamura do against a guy with the height of a damn tree and the muscles of a sumo wrestler? He was useless, Sawamura knew he was. It was pointless to go against someone that knew every move he was about to make.

There was nothing more he could do than to be pushed around until someone could drag him out of this hellhole Daichi sunk him into.

The thought of working with Daichi was more than a nightmare coming to life. Already, thoughts of what could happen to him shook Sawamura's body anxiously. He was not ready knowing he was going to be in for it from this day forward.

He turns on his heel, and proceeds to his next class in silence, pondering about what the next few days were going to look like for him.

"I'm not ready"

"You want to kill yourself?" Mei almost spirals into a laughing fit at the little 'joke' Sawamura made about his life being the most miserable ever incarnated.

It was lunch time and Sawamura decided to lounge somewhere other than the cafeteria. He didn't feel like eating there surrounded by all those people rambunctiously screaming and chattering. Even though his friends were okay with tagging along to sitting somewhere else to eat, Sawamura wanted to be alone at the moment and let out his steam. And what better person to rant to than his best friend in the whole world?

Besides with the wind blowing and thr skies covered, what better than to do than eat outside and enjoy the view?

Sawamura takes a seat at a bench in the more desolate courtyard, setting his tray of food on his lap while he talked with his best friend on the phone.

"Yes, and you won't stop me" Sawamura snaps as he eats the saturated salad dissolved in boiling water with tofu sticking out like marshmallows. He had sushi rolls on the side, with strips of fried chicken. It wasn't the best combination of a meal, but it was what he felt like eating.

He listens to Mei's constant laughing, who had also conveniently been eating lunch concurrently.

"Hilarious, wifey" he chuckles. Sawamura grumbles as he picks at the floating tofu with his chopsticks and plops the content into his mouth.

"I'm not laughing, Mei, I really do feel like the world is out to get me" Sawamura whines when thinking about pairing with Daichi to do the project then being told he had to do everything himself.
"What do you want me to do about it? Beat the planet up?" Mei snorts sarcastically. Sawamura rolls his eyes. He loved how much of a help Mei was.

"You're suppose to be my best friend Mei, why didn't you tell me high school was so rough?" Sawamura frowns. He knew Mei wouldn't think too deep into the statement and would refer to the normal struggles of an average high schooler, which was why it disappointed him to even spill why he actually hates Seidou. It was tougher to explain this to someone Sawamura knew wouldn't understand.

"Sorry I am not a mastermind, but if you have anything to tell me just CALL me! You know, something I feel you force yourself to do!" The blonde shouts into the phone. If the brunette listened closely he could hear Mei's teammates hushing him to quiet down.

But back to what Mei had said, Sawamura wished he was with eating lunch with him so he could punch him in the face; he wasn't that bad of a friend when he thought it over.

"I only call you when the time calls for it, plus you're a famous baseball player it's not like you exactly have all the time in the world to call me either" Sawamura huffs as he continues to eat, hoping the food would simply allow his problems to disappear for just one minute. But with each bite came a striking wave of remembrance.

"Fine, I will take the blame for that, but still! Come to a game once in a while you bad excuse for a wife!" Mei exclaims.

Sawamura stays silent for a while. "Okay, whatever, bye you insignificant husband" The brunette chuckles as he hung up abruptly, sputtering a laugh when he hears Mei shout at him to not do what he 'thought he was doing'. It was pretty funny when Sawamura could clearly imagine what Mei's face was looking like.

The first year quiets himself down from laughing any harder and stares down at his tray of food. 'Mei is so dumb' he grins with burning cheeks as he slips his phone into his front pocket.

Just as Sawamura is about to eat at one of his sushi rolls he hears, "So, husband? Want to fill me in?" And drops his chopsticks, deadpanning an annoyed look. He didn't even want to look beside him, though the figure was doing him justice by blocking the sun.

"Miyuki" Sawamura sighs as he looks up at the tall brunette.

"Ei" the infamous catcher looks down to meet the emotionless golden orbs that was not as thrilled to see him.

"What do you want, Kazuya?" The first year quips bitterly as he eats at his food.

Miyuki shrugs. "I saw you and came to say hi, only to find out you had a husband? I am kind of hurt, Ei" he chuckles humorously.

Sawamura raised a perfect brow. "I will chop you" he threatens as he pokes the ends of the chopsticks at Miyuki's stomach.

"You're dodging the topic" Miyuki cheekily smirks as he lays back on the bench. He snatches the wooden utensils from the first year and picks up a string of drenched salad with ease. He nonchalantly puts the substance in his mouth without a second thought.

Sawamura blushes at the gesture and looks down at his food. "You know my lips have been on that, right?" He barked with disgust as he tries to hide his food. It amazed him that even though Miyuki
came off as an intelligent person --though he would never tell him that to his face-- the things he did didn't seem to prove that theory.

"And?" Miyuki held Sawamura down then turns him over and snatches at his food.

Sawamura kicks him back. "Y-You're gross"

Miyuki didn't seem fazed by the comment. "You're gross for thinking to deeply about it" he remarks as he stares down at the first year. "Your cheeks are red by the way" he says as he pinches the chubby area of flesh.

Sawamura swats his hand away and covers his crimson cheeks with his hands to stop the heat from flowing. "S-So?!!" He blushes as he looks down at his lap.

"So, are you grossed out that I ate after you or because we indirectly kissed?" Miyuki leans closer so that the space between them dwindles to nothing more.

Now, Sawamura was beaming red that he could have been mistaken for a tomato. His body felt like he was covered in flames--paralyzed by the drivel statement that he felt like he could no longer move.

Sawamura knew Miyuki was enjoying how uncomfortable he was getting. If he didn't feel like he was stucked between rocks he would slap that stupid look off of his face.

"Y-You're the...worst" Sawamura madly blushes as he pulls his shirt up so that the fabric was long enough to cover the half mark of his cheeks. "I-I wasn't thinking like that at all" he mutters quietly that he almost sounded like he wanted to cry.

Miyuki pulls back from Sawamura so he isn't filled with any more discomfort. "You're lying, but I will spare you the guilt" he chuckles as he stares down at Sawamura's empty palm through his rim glasses. He takes the moment to look Sawamura up and down then makes a noise of annoyance.

"Ei, why did you come to Seidou?" He asked with a hint of interest. The question catches Sawamura off guard that his hand from his shirt slips. He jerks his head over to meet with Miyuki's intense amber eyes.

Seeing the look on his face, Sawamura buffers for an answer, unable to tell if Miyuki asking was a good or bad thing.

"I...I came because...because" Sawamura fumbles for an answer. He plays with the edge of the tray, unable to formulate a coherent response to reply with. "B-Because I wanted a fresh start at a good school" he swallows thickly, the sentence taking a lot to say. If the conversation was to escalate on a deeper level than they would finally be able to reconnect.

He would finally get to understand what happened to Miyuki back then.

Sawamura flicks his gaze over at the male, watching as Miyuki stayed silent, staring off into the distance with something on his mind. He didn't want to rush for an answer, so he remained quiet until Miyuki finally knits his brows. "Why do you want a new start?" He asked with a small smile.

Sawamura felt his heart tear. "I-It's kind of complicated" he stammers with tears threatening to escape. 'Had Miyuki seriously forgotten what happened between us?' The question burned at the back of the first year's mind. The possibility of that being true irked him.

"Hm, tell me" Miyuki says with a twinge of curiosity.
"What do you mean 'tell me'?' Sawamura almost laughs a cry out as he stares at Miyuki in disbelief. "You should know".

Miyuki frowns. "I should?"

Sawamura bites down on his lips. His heart was beginning to beat copiously and his leg was shaking with exasperation at Miyuki's oblivion state of mind. "Y-Yes!" Sawamura clutches his fist with anger as he sets his tray away.

Animosity built up at it's highest peak with Sawamura that he felt like he was going to break.

Miyuki stares up at Sawamura who was now standing in front of him with a pleading look. A look that was telling Miyuki to remember. But he didn't seem to know where this was going. "Sorry, Ei" Miyuki stands up to his feet, trying to come up with something to reconcile with. He could see that this was affecting Sawamura emotionally. "But I don't know what you are talking about" he watches as Sawamura's face falls white.

"M-Miyuki you have to know wh-" Sawamura gets cut short when shrieks fill his ears. Before he could turn around to find the source of the squeals, Sawamura is pushed away from Miyuki.

Miyuki is about to check on him until a small group of girls sprints in front of him holding a pile of flyers. They seemed to be around his age group, or older by chance. They were really pretty that it was no wonder they came up to Miyuki.

"Miyuki-kun, we are very sorry to disturb you but we were wondering if you were going to the school festival next weekend" a blonde asked while batting her lashes, flaunting her skirt around. The catcher tries to answer the girls one by one while looking at the impatient Sawamura, telling him with his eyes to not leave.

But Sawamura only crossed his arms and looked away. He didn't know what to do with Miyuki's head in a different place. He wanted to tell him why he came to Seidou and the reason behind that. For now though, it didn't seem like a good idea with many people around to hear.

He sighs. Sawamura really wanted to explain himself when Miyuki left back then. He was curious about what happened to him after...that. Only problem was: Miyuki had no clue what Sawamura was talking about.

It felt like his heart tore in half at the clueless look Miyuki gave him. He really did seem confused. The thought alone was painful to think about.

Sawamura clutches at the hem of his shirt. "Mh-mm, bye, Miyuki" he quickly walks away before he could hear the other say anything, undeterred from leaving his food. Sawamura felt like crying. He wanted to run into a bathroom stall and bawl his eyes out. *He is like a different person now* hot, fresh tears stung at his eyes as he runs behind a building in the far east away from the crowd. He tries to calm his racing heart, but it seemed impossible.

Sulking down the wall of the building, Sawamura pulls his bag off of him and sets it to the side so it doesn’t get in the way. He throws his arms around his legs and pulls them closer to his chest, decreasing the gap between his chest.

A shaky cry leaves his lips as he stares off at a monarch butterfly sitting with tranquil on a leaf in the bush in front of him. His golden orbs fell down to the few rocks a few feet away.

Involuntarily, the tears begin to spill. Sawamura bites down on his wrist as he thinks back to the events that took place years ago. His chest fiercely pumps up and down. Memories of how he had
been emotionally and mentally suffering makes Sawamura bite down harder on his wrist.

"Dammit" he cries as he pulls away and dries his face with his shirt. He sniffs, then folds his arms over his chest and hunches over on his knees for support.

"How can you be so clueless?" He asked himself aloud, referring to Miyuki. Sawamura bites back on his lips in disbelief and lays back against the wall, bringing a sleeve up to his mouth. A small sob departs from his lips, and seconds later, Sawamura breaks down. He doesn't try to hide his cries, nor does he think about the spewing he does that gives off the spot he was concealed in away from the other students.

Nothing subtle. There wasn't much he could do when he was this unstable. Sawamura grip at each of his arms, digging his nails into the lace of the shirt. "You're the worst, Kazuya" he sobs, bowing his head into his knees in misery.

From there on, the rest of the day continues on in dread. The day couldn't possibly get worst for Sawamura since he was sure the worst had already happened. Instead of his usual giggly, bouncy composure, Sawamura was more timid and quiet. Classes go by, and some of the students note how the brunette doesn't go on his daily rants, nor does he attempt to. In fact, Haruno thought that Sawamura seemed more distant than anything; like he wanted to be left alone with nothing to give a shit about. She stirs out of his way though, unsure if he needed help. Sometimes it was best to stay away, and so she hoped Sawamura would do fine after a couple of hours to himself.

When seventh period came around, Sawamura acted around his depression. He avoids saying anything to sound pessimistic or showing off any emotions that will surrender the fact that there was something wrong with him. To substitute his sadden demeanor, Sawamura shows his friends on Haruno's laptop what he had been working on, and so far, they were all impressed. No one seemed to have noticed how down the brunette was, which was a start so far.

"Oh wow, Aniki looks really cool" Haruichi ogles the section belonging to his older brother. He had been caught in the air catching a ball way out of his zone, but had snapped into the top edge of his glove preventing it from going anywhere.

"Look at that guy, I see him around a lot" Toujou points to Jun, that had been diving for a ball heading to center. The actual setting wasn't shown, it was just easily decrypted. The color background of the spread had been blue since doing white would defeat the purpose of the team having mostly white uniforms. Cropping out the actual background had been a hastle since the position the players were in were quite unique. "That's Isashiki-senpai!" Sawamura names when he looks at the figure Toujou was pointing to. Why did it hurt to smile?

"And this guy?" Kanemaru points to the big guy powerfully swinging his bat at a ball while in the right handed batter's box. "Masuko-senpai" Why did it hurt to feign happiness?

He goes on introducing the team, saying what position they played and their personalities on and off the field. Sawamura even shows other spreads he had been working on for them in case something goes wrong with the original or he doesn't end up liking it in the end. How excited he seemed to have been showing his friends his work had them completely fooled. No one had suspected anything out of the ordinary of their loudmouth friend.

Even Haruno was drowned in his adept skills as a photographer to remember why she was concerned for him in the first place.

"Wow, these are all nice Eijun-kun" Haruichi says as he clicks back and forward to the two spreads he thought were the best.
Sawamura blushes at the many compliments he was getting from his friends and could only silently take in the moment. "Finally something you are good at" Furuya sighs as if he was filled with worry the whole time.

Baffled, Sawamura shoots Furuya a dirty look. "What's that suppose to mean?!" He shouts loud enough to grab the class' attention.

"Can you two just reconcile your differences and shut the hell up?" Kanemaru shot bitterly as he continues scrolling through the many spreads, muttering, "how can someone as talented as him be so obnoxious at the same time?" to the others.

Haruno tries to not laugh, but the other two weren't as sly about it.

"That's not nice, Shinji" Toujou stifles his laughter through his palm while trying to be tough on his friend. It doesn't work.

"You're the one laughing" The blonde male reminds him as he leans back into his seat.

"It's okay, I am use to not having supportive friends!" Sawamura exclaims to the small group as he drapes his arms over his chest to express his resentment towards them.

Haruichi chuckles. "Eijun-kun" he hums his name, but for no reason in particular.

Haruno, who had been quiet--still looking through the many spreads-- says, "Hey, Sawamura, have you started your community service spread?" While looking up from her laptop.

That grabs Sawamura's attention. He blinks mindlessly, contemplating whether he should even answer. They had gotten the titles of their spreads almost two and a half months ago, so he had to be done with at least a piece of his secondary spread, they all thought.

"About that" Sawamura nervously scratches at his cheek, looking at his lap in shame to avoid their curious eyes. "I haven't started" he blatantly says, igniting a few gasps, a sharp comment, and odd looks.

"Why not, Eijun-kun?" Haruichi asked, ignoring the "why are you guys so surprised?" Reprimand from Furuya.

Sawamura shrugs. "I just don't have time to go see what they are doing outside of school, and even if I did I don't have a schedule of their events" he tells with a stressful groan. It irked him that he hadn't even thought about starting the spread.

"Then why don't you get one from the main office?" Toujou asked momentarily.

Sawamura jerked his head to look directly at the orange haired male. "They have them there?" The brunette asked with a sense of betrayal. It was like a sacred code was being transmitted to him to find some sort of rare artifact.

"Yeah," Toujou shakes his head slowly. "I thought you knew that?"

"Of course I did!" Sawamura laughs sarcastically as he stands from his seat with a raised hand. "Mr. Ochiai I need to go to the main office for a moment" he specifies with a few snickers echoing the classroom.

The teacher gives him a iniquitous look for a good few seconds before writing him a pass and hands it over. "Thanks!" Sawamura chimes loudly as he skips out the door, ignoring the comments about
how loud he was and to quiet down.

Like that would ever happen when he was around his friends.

"See you soon, Eijun-kun" Haruichi waves fervidly. "Yeah, don't get lost" Kanemaru snickers as he reverts back to Toujou to show him the work he had been investing in since the period of two months.

With that Sawamura skips to the main office, whistling to himself while on his way. The halls were quiet, but even so the brunette could still hear the faint noises of the teacher's giving a lesson and the students enthusiastically answering.

It could be the fact that it was the last period of the day that had everyone bustling with content, but to Sawamura, he saw no real reason to be happy when he still had work to do when the last bell rung.

If anything the only thing Sawamura looked forward to while heading to the dorms was falling asleep in his original room-like bed.

And the showers when they are free of all baseball players.

Walking alone to the office gave Sawamura time to think to himself. He was finally free of his friends for a short period so he could finally let the charade down.

His face simply falters, a more disheartened look enrolling onto his face. The sound of his steps replenishes in his ears, and somehow gives off an even more neglected feeling. He didn't know why he felt alone. Why he felt remotely obscured from his friends, or why he had the need to detach himself from them. He didn't want to...but he felt like he should.

Sawamura knew it would pain them if they found out about what was under his clothes. He didn't know what their reaction would be but he wasn't curious either.

And Furuya was too observant. He seemed to be everywhere even though his presence wasn't known. It felt creepy, and made Sawamura wary of the taller first year. He was going to have to watch him so he tells nothing.

Finding his way to the office, Sawamura knocks on the door before allowing himself in after a 'come in' registers.

He opens the door, and greets himself to all the workers. He was a bit relieved when he saw Takashima there with the coach. They seemed to be in a deep conversation given the way they were gesturing at one another and pointing between the papers on the desk. But when hearing the voice belonging to the brunette's, it was Takashima who looked up first and politely smiles at him as a greeting. "Ah, good afternoon Sawamura" she pulls out a pen from a cup of other utensils and writes on the paper before her. The coach turns in his seat to greet him with the usual shake of his head.

"H-Hello" Sawamura meekly waves to them and does a cursory bow to show that he had mannerism. Shyly, he smiles as he approaches the desk the two sat at, and gently lays his arms down on the counter.

"What brings you here?" Takashima asked, striking a conversation. "Did one of the guys bother you?" The coach asked while still looking down at the paper work in front of him with a marker in hand.

It seemed like they were working on a subject regarding baseball given the description the coach said
about who fits the qualities of 'next year's captain'. Sawamura had no clue what that meant, but he did know it had to deal with who would replace Tetsu and Jun when they retired. If that was any close.

Sawamura tries to not push the blame on Miyuki so he could suffer at least a bit--though that would be nice to witness. But he knew he would get caught so he decided to save the act for another day when he felt more of himself. "Nope, not at all" he chuckles softly at the thought of punishing the slick-mouthed tanuki.

"I was wondering if you guys still had the schedule for the community service events?" He asked while circling a finger on the vinyl counter that seemed to have sparked his interest for the moment.

He watches as the two exchange questionable looks before the coach pulls out a bin and withdraws a file from inside. He hands it over to Takashima, who easily finds the said sheet of paper with the help of the labeling tabs. "Here you go" she says with delight as Sawamura takes the paper.

"Thanks" He says as he folds the paper and inserts the object into his butt pocket.

"Is it for another one of your spreads?" Takashima figures while placing her hands on the arms. She is tracing something on a separate paper than pushes it over to the coach. Sawamura nods a frail 'yes'. "Yeah, I only have two spreads" he admits with redden cheeks. He didn't understand why he got so timid amid the coaches. When it came to conversation, Sawamura wasn't the best. But when it came to him being centered in the middle of a discussion he got kind of diffident.

"Well then good luck" She waves endearingly, smile unwavering as she dismisses him. "Inform us if any of the guys are acting out" the coach proposes with a mischevious grin.

"Of course" Sawamura chuckles as he waves to them. He leaves the room and skips off back to his classroom. He was kind of relieved to have finally gotten the schedule so that alone lifted his spirits about completing the spread.

As he heads back to class Sawamura jumps at the sound of lockers being smashed. It was more of people slamming their fist into the metallic boxes to either scare those in the halls or disturb quiet classrooms. It worked, one. Whenever he was in the halls at the time it always successfully frightened him.

The halls grow eerie as the laughers of the guys skipping class rings out of earshot. It gave off a creepy vibe that Sawamura was not a fan of. He walks the halls slowly, taking each step cautiously as he peeks every corner he was authorized to turn to get to his class.

Just as he turns the hall Sawamura spots the teens turning the next corridor while laughing despicably at their illicit doings.

Sawamura shivers at how edgy their laughs creeped him out. His class was awfully percise in the direction they were heading and he feared of being seen by them. People like them weren't just going to simply allow him to meandor by without saying anything. It happens to lots of people and they were irrelevant students with no better entertainment than to create it themselves; lounging around behind them didn't seem like a bad idea.

"Eijun"

"Hm?" Sawamura turns at the mention of his name, only to find no one in sight. He does a full turn around him and holds onto his arm as he backs up deeper into the hall.

"Did anyone call me?" Sawamura spoke at a medium. He didn't like that he was getting no response
from a voice that he was sure called him out.

'Why does it feel like I am losing it today?' Sawamura thought to himself as he closes his eyes tightly. He places his hands on his head and shakes his head to rid of the tragic phenomenon that had been occurring to haunt him.

He finally opens his eyes after mitigating his mind, and blinks black the darkening bedim steadily lightening.

Sawamura sighs heavily and lets out an inarticulate muffle. "I really need to re-ah!"

Swiftly, a hand swoops up from behind Sawamura before he could make it out in a nick of time. His mouth is covered to prevent any noise and is pressed back against a hard chest for aid. The brunette flails his arms about but is held down tightly than dragged into a room without anyone noticing.

When the door closes, Sawamura is dropped onto the ground with a loud thud. "Nngh-!" Sawamura grunts as he crawls to his knees and looks up to see Daichi locking the door to one of the guy bathrooms.

Sawamura's eyes contract, and he mouths a swear as he props himself against the wall of the room for support.

He was scared out of his mind. Sawamura didn't know what he did to be trawled into the bathroom near the end of the day than dropped to the tile floor as if he wasn't composed of any bones.

There was no calming his heart now. It felt like his heart was really about to burst out of his chest no matter how much he tried to soothe his nerves.

Daichi turns around, and marches up to the brunette that had been holding his hands up in defense when he was approaching him. "Wait! Daichi don-!" The guy picks him up in one grab and slams him against the wall, bashing one of his hands next to the side of his body.

"Who the fuck do you think you are to try me, huh?" He yells at Sawamura with furrowed brows and a twisted look.

Too scared to say anything, Sawamura stays silent. He was still unaware of the reason why he was being punished now of all time. "Answer the damn question" he barked as he throws Sawamura back onto the floor and kicked the brunette in his abdomen.

Sawamura's eyes slam shut with pain, teeth swirving into his lips to prevent a cry from escaping his throat. A low groan whisp out his mouth as Sawamura grips his hand tightly so that his knuckles are baring a familiar white complexion. "I-I don't.." He pants tiredly, trying to gather his thoughts of what the guy meant. The pain escalating on his stomach was unbearable that he could barely even talk. He grabs at the inflicted area, gently caressing the spot as he helped himself up.

"W-What do you..." Sawamura couldn't find the energy to speak complete sentences at the moment. He wasn't made of stone, and like stated he was built like a stick. It didn't take much to bring him down. He takes a big inhale to fill his gasping lungs.

"First of all why the fuck are you so damn happy all the time? It's like there is something always on your mind" Daichi spews through gritted teeth.

"I see you texting during class, who is it that makes you smile like that?" Daichi steps on his aching leg that hadn't much been hurting lately. But now that Daichi was crushing it hurt like a bitch.
Sawamura cries out in pain, slamming his fist on the ground to express how much it hurt. He winces when the endless pain strikes throughout his body, spurring into what felt like a loop of constant agony.

He begins to crawl away, but Daichi grabs him by the back of his collared shirt and wraps his arms around Sawamura's neck to prevent him from moving. "Answer the god. Damn. Question!" He yells, and with each emphasized word comes with a hit more forceful and painful than the last, striking at Sawamura's chest. A hand hangs wrapped around his neck as the action furthers, holding onto the falling limp body.

Sawamura clutches onto Daichi's arm that had been holding him hostage, attempting to break free of his grip. "I-It's just a friend!" He cries out and is thrown to the ground after he recieves a blow to his already aching stomach.

"A friend?" Daichi seethes as he stood above the brunette with glowering eyes. Sawamura numbly shakes his head, trying to shake away the tears pinching at his eyes. He tries to not panic, and focuses on his rapid heart rate that had tremendously accelerated. Now wasn't the time for his asthma to be kicking in but his lungs were screaming at him with other intentions.

Sawamura coughs, exhales, then inhales carefully. He gets himself to stand on all fours while Daichi had remained silent. He places a hand on his chest to help alleviate the pain, and lays his head down on the tile floor with his eyes closed.

"What friend..." Daichi finally asked as he bends down to Sawamura's level, laying a hand at the latter's head so they were meeting eye to eye. "Makes you have that sick look on your face?" He barked with gritted teeth.

Unable to come up with anything, Sawamura remains silent, sniffing excessively with the known fact that he wasn't going to get out of this easily. "Tell me who the fuck it is or-"

"It's a friend of mine at another school, okay?! His name is Sanada a-"

"Bullshit!" Daichi rose up to his feet and jammed his foot onto Sawamura's injured once again. Knowing better than to scream, the brunette stays silent, mentally breaking down inside. "I know it's that guy, fuck! Why does he have to get in the way of everything?!" He kicks at Sawamura's fallen body repeatedly.

By now, Sawamura couldn't hold it in. His tears start to spill and his vision blurs. He couldn't believe Daichi thought he was lying about Sanada being the person he was texting all that time. It was as if he thought Sawamura was covering for Miyuki.

"It wasn't Miyuki" Sawamura coughs as he spins over on the floor. He howls at the discomfort settling in his muscles. They grew sore and throbbed with so much tension. Despite his hatred for the Seidou catcher, Sawamura wasn't going to put the blame on the guy that only teases him for his amusement. Even if his life was in disarray he wouldn't allow Miyuki's to crumble if it meant getting tormented without him knowing.

But Daichi didn't believe him one bit.

"You got one last chance, and if you disobey me I am going to show you a new way of torture" he spat as he stepped over the stationary body that had been an impediment to the doorway. Sawamura finds the last of his strength to push himself off the floor, pensively staring at the retreating figure with somber eyes.
"Also," Sawamura snaps (basically flinches) out of his daze when he hears Daichi's voice infiltrate his ears. The taller male turns around so he is facing Sawamura with a dismal look written on his face. "Your nose is bleeding, fix that disgusting mess" he snarls with a repulsive look; nose scrunched as if he smelt something foul.

Silence fills the room when Daichi leaves, the sound of the door clicking shut scaring Sawamura. He sits there for a moment collecting himself, unhinged, but mostly incapacitated. He didn't feel like moving, nor did he feel like going back to class.

He sniffs once, than twice. Laying slouched against the wall, Sawamura sits there with his head laying slump onto his knees to catch a breath. After a good two minutes pass he finally musters up the energy to stand to his feet and wipe at his bloody nose with a tissue. His uniform shirt had been stained with the thick liquid, making itself visible for just about anyone to see if they were to walk in front of him.

"Great" Sawamura mutters as he races to the sink and drenches the tainted area with water. He makes sure he had gotten the section good enough so that red was nothing more than an illusion to the eye.

Sawamura splashes water on his face so that the blood prints were of no more, freeing even his face of the blood marks. After patting himself dry with the remaining paper towels, Sawamura tries his best to dry off his shirt before leaving the bathroom. He throws the used towels away when he is sure the stained section cleared up.

Moving hurts.

Sawamura knew he recieve beatings regularly, but this had to hurt out of everything done to him. His body felt heavy and his brains were meshed up. He stayed in the bathroom for a while to recover. The leg that had been stepped on went numb to the point where Sawamura could not even lift it. Yeah, now he had to get moving. The bell would be ringing shortly and if he could play this off correctly than maybe he could get by unnoticed.

"Oh what am I kidding?" Sawamura sobs as he leans against the wall. He takes a glimpse at his leg and cringes unhealthily. "I can't even walk! How am I suppose to get through my last class with a hurt leg?" He groans.

'I have to skip the rest of class, I can't risk anyone figuring out I am injured' Sawamura concluded. He didn't like that he had to skip the rest of class, but his leg was seriously hurting and needed medical attention.

Getting to the nurse seemed like a more reasonable option, but he couldn't risk letting her spill his secrets when he wasn't around. Even if he promised her to not he felt like a part of her would do it anyway because it was her job.

Sawamura limps out of the bathroom quietly, and after checking the hallways to ensure it was clear, he begins trudging down to his right, knowing a way out in the back of his head.

The teen looks out for any sign of any figures he might know on a personal level. Even when a random student sprints by in need of the bathroom or for water Sawamura fixes his body so that he is standing straight up. And if he has to walk he would take a step on his left leg. "Ah!" Sawamura shrieks when pain burst throughout his leg.

He leans against the wall and lets out a faint cry. "It hurts so badly" Sawamura tumbles, but catches himself and recommences to the exit. He winces at every sprout of agony threatening his leg, biting
his now bruised lips as he busted through the double doors.

Walking to the dorms, Sawamura is full of relief when the familiar buildings come in sight. He tries to run, but even though his leg was on the verge of giving out beneath him, Sawamura still pressed on. His face contorts from the torment his leg was causing him. He continues though, feeling his conscious waver.

Even though he hadn't been hit in the head it felt like his skull was caving into himself. Sawamura hurries, and just when he is crossing the small field to get to the dorms the bell rings. The guys would be here any minute to get ready for practice, and he was only halfway to his dorm.

Sawamura begins to run, using his unharmed leg to do most of the work. Pain etched onto his face when he grabs onto a pillar for support. "Ow!" He cries when pressure adds onto his foot. He clutches onto the pillar tightly, suppressing the urge to break it in half in hopes of reducing his own pain.

But he had to hurry. If the guys saw him like this it was over. They knew by now his leg was 'healed', and if they saw him limping to his room they were sure to figure out what was going on. And as much as he wanted their help he knew he couldn't tell them that he was being abused. He just knew he wasn't capable of being around them more when they knew. He didn't want to be pitied on; looked down on because he was fragile and defenseless.

When Sawamura turns the corner to his dorms, he is almost about to faint until he spots Jun and Tanba talking together. "Shit" he mutters as he pushed himself back before he was seen, crouching into the corner of the wall for a hiding spot. "Jun, did you see that?" Tanba asked, and somehow he sounded much more closer than what they seemed to be.

Sawamura's heart begins to race as he looks around for a place to go to as his rebound. He covers his mouth with his sleeve to bite back on any shriek; grabbing the wall as a guide as he quietly begins tip-toeing backwards.

Heartbeats fill his own ears, and his blood warms. "Huh? What is it?" Jun asked, footsteps adventing closer and closer. And the closer they got to the vicinity Sawamura was accommodated in, the said brunette would inch back further away.

"I could of sworn I saw something...er, someone rather" Tanba spoke meticulously. "I don't know it happened kind of fast"

Sawamura bites on his wrist as he hides behind an evident dividing wall. Planting himself in the crease of the big wall providing him a place to hide, Sawamura scoots back into the corner until his back is against the wall.

"Someone? It's probably Kuramochi pulling a damn prank to scare us" Jun remarks with exasperation. The mention of his brother's name makes Sawamura seep lower into the wall so he isn't seen. He covers his mouth, then averts his eyes downward. At least when they found him he wouldn't be seen hurt in the position he was in.

"Again? That guy never rest" Tanba says, and when they take a step into the hall Sawamura is contained in, their shadows reflect.

Sawamura mouths a curse as he digs himself deeper into the retaining wall. He watches as their shadows approach closer.

"Oi! Kuramochi! We know it's one of your damn pranks!" Jun shouts awfully loud. A fist is slam on
the wall adjacent to the corner Sawamura is kept in, his eyes constricting when he spots Jun’s fingers grasping onto the edge.

Remaining quiet, Sawamura swallows a lump in his throat. "Shit, I am going to get figured out! They are going to kill me, my life is over! I am such a scre-"

"Oi, Tanba" Sawamura could almost cries at the mention of Miyuki’s voice. Even Jun heads back to see what the seidou catcher was in need of.

"Huh? What Miyuki" Tanba asked, their footsteps fading, but not in the direction Sawamura needed them to go in.

"Coach wants me to help you strengthen your pitching form, so let's go to the bullpen"

Sawamura listens to the incoherent mutters stifled by Tanba as they head away, and for after staying for a good three minutes to ensure they were no longer around, the brunet starts to head to his dorm. He was lucky to not have been seen by any of the others on his way. Safe calls don't come second time around.

"Ugh, finally" Sawamura closes his door behind him, then drops to his knees after locking it shut. He crawls over to the curtains then shuts them together so no light shun through.

Subsequently, Sawamura falls prostrate on the ground. He was exhausted. All he wanted to do was lay there until he became a full fledge corpse. That seemed like a good idea about now.

He knew he should be concerned about his fresh wounds not getting an infection, but did it really matter at this point?

Grunting as he hauls himself up, Sawamura stands to his feet and hobbles over to his bed. He kicks his shoes off and steadily begins to strip out of his clothes. Just unbuttoning his shirt ached.

Looking down at his upper body, Sawamura terribly cringes at the sight of purple bruises on top of faded ones. Some have completely disappeared, but it seemed like he had a big hole in his stomach where Daichi had repeatedly kicked him. Like some kid came up to him and drew on his stomach with permanent marker. He washes his hands over his face, a distressed sigh engulfing the room.

"This is so ugly" he glides his fingers over the darkening skin. Sawamura checks himself out. He lays his arms back for support, eyes scrutinizing every aspect of his body. "I'm so ugly" he groans as he falls back on his bed. He lays in his bed for a moment, soaking in the comfort of his cushioned mattress and soft pillows.

After this tragedy of a day, Sawamura wants out. He wanted this day to be over with so he could continue on with his life. But that's how every day goes for him. Every day holds something the same as the day before but in another procedure.

He wanted to sleep to end the day faster, but he couldn't bring himself to do so. If he had to be honest, Sawamura felt like crying. With Miyuki not being able to remember what went down years back --which hurt him on an emotional level-- with a combination of Daichi catching him in the halls and literally kicking the ever living shit out of him, yeah, the day was just like any other day.

"Why would he bring up the question then? We've met before and the question alone spoke volume of us having a connection, but to blatantly say he has no recollection of our encounters--...what is wrong with you, Miyuki?" Sawamura turns in his bed as he sinks his face deeper into the pillow he cradled.
It didn't make any sense. To add on to his temporary dementia, it struck him that Daichi said a few things that stood out to him as well. Wiping at his tears, Sawamura thinks back to the times Daichi said things that made him seem suspicious.

"It doesn't matter" Sawamura sighs as he dabs a knuckle at his dampened cheeks. He lays up from his bed, contemplating on whether or not he should join the practice with the players.

He shrugs. "Maybe if I just take a few pills I will be fine" he says as he pulls his hair back. Sawamura gradually slides off the bed then heads to his dresser. He takes the small container of half empty pills and a tub of ointment cream. He pours three pills into his hand and tosses them into his mouth in insouciance.

Taking them came with such ease now. He takes the tub of soothing ointment and spreads the cream over the constituent, bruised skin of his stomach. The pain doesn't relieve instantly despite taking three pills, but taking a superfluous amount doesn't concern him with any worries. "There, I guess" Sawamura sighs as he burries his medical supplies in the bottom of his folded shirts. He had to remember to go to the doctors so he could get a refill on his inhaler, that way he isn't breathing rigidly while cluelessly wondering why the medicine wasn't spurring in through each actuation.

"I'll go soon, hopefully" Sawamura mutters as he spots a piece of the bandage wraps hiding under a pile of shirts. He remembered that when the doctor left he had secretly kept a roll in case Kuramochi needed it for his arm. Now it proved to be useful since he needed to check on his leg. Sawamura grabs the bundle of wraps and topples back onto his bed. The khakis pants were already tight so there was no point in keeping them on.

Stripping himself free of his pants, Sawamura admires the absolute monstrosity of the framework promoted by Daichi.

His leg was definitely swelling. It hurt to just poke at it. Being on the meds doesn't really ounce in any pain that badly but it still hurt like hell.

Unwrapping the bandages from the plastic, Sawamura begins to wrap his leg that had been the most traumatized. It takes a good few minutes to perfectly wrap his leg up. The way it was wrapped had Sawamura convinced to never participate in the medical field.

Now all he wanted to do now was drown in some good food. No amount of food could heal his injuries but they are useful to numb his problems for just a moment.

After a good thirty minutes pass of just sitting there with no intention to ever move, Sawamura finally musters the fortitude to change into a new set of attire. His outfit consisting of the same turtle neck, a white tee with an embroidered cursive A with a circle encasing it, than baggy black pants and black socks. Lucky that his face and arms hadn't really been bruised, Sawamura tries to walk around.

And it doesn't hurt as much.

"Ah-hah!" Sawamura laughs triumphantly at the dissipating pain.

"Bakamura, you here?" Sawamura jerks his head at the door. He see's a shadow whisking back and forward. The familiar stature, the styled hair: Kuramochi!

"Hey, Kuramochi-senpai!" Sawamura beams when he opens the door. To his surprise he is wearing casual clothes. Not just clothes he randomly throws on like a wrestling shirt and some joggers. No-
an actual black tee with an imprinted skull, a lacy black and blue striped button up on top, dark gray pants, and black shoes. The shortstop also seemed to be holding something. "Oh, you're actually dressed!" The first year points out.

"Hyaha! I know right? We have a day off before our game tomorrow and we were allowed to take time off since we have been working out a lot recently" even Kuramochi sounded like he was still registering the news he had gotten from the coach. It was rare for him to even say the work 'break' whether they were training or not.

"Oh really? That's cool!" Sawamura grins.

Kuramochi ruffles the brunette's hair. "Mhm, and the guys and I were going to watch an afternoon game that had got postpone from the rain in the east, wanna join?" The shortstop asked as he pokes Sawamura's nose.

The tip of his nose burns from where Kuramochi pointed at. "S-Sure, I'll come" he blushes.

"Good" Kuramochi hums as he pulls the item from around his back and hands it to the brunette. "By the way, a friend of yours dropped this off to you" it was his book bag.

Sawamura felt guilt penetrate his veins. "W-Who was it?" Sawamura asked as he took the bag from the shortstop. "That dropped it off"

Kuramochi shrugs as he watches his brother put the bag in his room. "Some tall, lanky guy with an emotionless look...he told me to tell you 'don't worry', is something going on?" He asked as Sawamura returns to the front of the threshold with his camera hanging wrapped around his neck.

Instead of answering, Sawamura asked, "Kuramochi-senpai, how would you feel if someone you knew since childhood years can't remember this event you were both apart of...like, I don't know, a car crash?" He closes the door behind him and the two begins to walk.

At first, Sawamura received no answer. He looks up to see Kuramochi staring at him full of perturbation. "H-Hypothetically speaking, of course" he playfully punches the second year.

Kuramochi gives it a thought as they begin to look for the others. "For a tragic accident, I guess it would be kind of depressing"

"What if it was your friend that inflicted that kind of suffering on you?" Sawamura pressed on.

"Fuck, Sawamura, you're getting steep about this" Kuramochi flicks him at his neck. Sawamura blushes. "S-Sorry, I was just wondering your input" he stammers.

Kuramochi makes a noise of understanding for answering after giving it some thought. "I guess it could be kind of frustrating...if they don't remember making me suffer than I guess I would just simply tell them...but just telling them isn't always easy y'know?" Kuramochi says with a small smile as he glances at the first year who was staring at him with those perfect golden eyes of his.

"Sometimes staying quiet is a good thing, but not necessarily all the time" Kuramochi says wisely, eyes staring off into the distance from nothing in particular

Sawamura slowly nods. "Yeah...people should start speaking their mind" he frowns, ruefully gazing down at his feet to distract himself from the hypocrisy.

"I know right?" Kuramochi chuckles as he pinches Sawamura's cheeks. "But not every one is bold like you, Bakamura" he slings a hand over the taller male's shoulder and pulls him down so he is
fisting his head with a knuckle.

"Ow! Kuramochi!" Sawamura cries from not how hard the latter's fist was digging into his skull, but how his leg uncomfortably bended to get him into that position.

"Oh lighten up, you'll thank me later" Kuramochi jabs him with his hip as they continue walking.

"It's about time you guys got here!" Jun shouts when the two reached the front of the school. Sawamura was surprised a lot of them were going to watch the game. It was mostly the first stringers but some second stringers tagged along in separate groups.

Peculiarly, it was weird seeing everyone so dressed up. "You guys had me convinced you got lost, it's not often we actually leave campus" Kawakami snorts with a turn of his heel. The joke was expected. After all it's not like the guys leave school on a regular basis to hang out.

"Hyaha! I know right? It feels like I am escaping prison" Kuramochi cackles.

"Not that you could tell the difference" Ryousuke butts in with a sly grin. Kuramochi gives the pinklet a look to which the second baseman retaliates with a raised hand. "Don't push it"

"You win" Kuramochi throws his hands up in defense, an ashamed look breaking his face. "I know" he hears his partner say.

"So whoever wins this game we end up facing tomorrow?" Sawamura asked, changing the subject. "No" Tetsu answers genuinely, his features tender. Even in a different set of clothes he still appeared dominant over everyone. "Whoever we watch today goes against Seiko tomorrow" he adds.

"Seiko?" Sawamura blinks adorably.

"It's a school full of muscular, tall, players who eats metal for breakfast, iron for dinner, and gold for dessert. They can lift up to one-fifty weights while doing crutches" Ryousuke says to Sawamura ghostly, grinning impishly when he gets promising results of the first years terrified look. The second baseman chokes back on a laugh. "Ryou-san, don't scare him" Kuramochi says as he throws a protective arm around Sawamura.

Ryousuke hums contemptuously. "I am just saying though those guys are as dumb as a goldfish. Meanwhile I bet they can't even run and breathe at the same time" Ryou retorts with a hum of amusement.

"Don't say that, Kominato" Tetsu says as they all begin to walk to the bus stop.

"As if we don't look at Masuko the same way" Jun snorts as he turns to the big guy that had peeked Kawakami's interest in touching his belly.

"Cut down on the pudding" Tetsu can only say.

As the rest engages into coversation, Sawamura scans the group only to find Miyuki staring deadly at him. The brunette gulps, surprised that he hadn't noticed the megane with them from before. But something was off about him. He was being quiet again.

Frowning, Sawamura stays close to Kuramochi and averts his eyes so he isn't looking at the second year catcher.

When the bus comes, Sawamura finally looks up to see Miyuki boarding first. 'Mmm, why is he here anyway?' He pouts as he steps onto the bus along with Kuramochi, paying their toll.
The bus is at full capacity. Some of the players had been standing, hanging onto the leverage hangers, while the other half sat down.

"T-There is a lot of people, could they be heading to the game as well?" Sawamura asked when he is pushed into Kuramochi’s chest when trying to face him.

"Possibly, baseball is a popular sport in Japan after all" he answers as he hangs onto the brunette so he isn't waving around. "So I've heard" Sawamura mumbles as he stays close.

For the duration of the ride, Sawamura listens to the third years conversation about who they expect to win what game. Apparently the teams they were going to go see was Ichidai and Yakushi. Hearing the name again in his head, Sawamura almost had a heart attack when he realized who they were going to be watching. It even came to Kuramochi’s attention when he asked if Sawamura was even breathing with his face turning a shade of blue.

"Yakushi? never heard of them" Tetsu says when the bus comes to a stop at the stadium. Even though they were on the bus Sawamura could still hear the shouts of the crowd going crazy. His heart thumped.

"All these goddamn schools showing up out of nowhere!" Jun yells, attracting unwanted attention.

"They are probably one of those public schools. Who knows, maybe they are wetting themselves shitless when they heard they were going against a top-tier school like Ichidai" Kuramochi wickedly grins.

Sawamura frowns as he walks out of the bus first. He was upset that the guys were underestimating a team that they never even heard of. Whether it was their prestige fame as Seidou players or their overconfidence magnifying, they should never belittle a team that could grow strong before their eyes.

But then again, Sawamura was excited. He wanted to see the looks on their faces when Sanada and Raichi did beat Ichidai, because he believed they would win no matter what.

They walk into the stadium and find seats in the middle section. Most of the first years sat behind them while Sawamura, Kuramochi, Ryousuke, and Kawakami sat before them. The game had already advanced to the bottom of the second, the score was 1-5 with Ichidai winning.

Sawamura felt his stomach churn. From what he has seen from the guys, coming back from something like a four year lead was extremely difficult.

"Hey, Ichidai is winning" Kawakami says aloud with some sort of relief flexing in his tone.

"Good job, captain obvious" Ryousuke remarks. "Now look around and tell us if we are in a baseball or football stadium."

Kawakami rolls his eyes at the transparent sarcasm. "I'm just saying, if Ichidai wins the next two games wouldn't we go against them? And since we already beat them in a practice game way back shouldn't that be an easy win to the semi-finals?" He asked looking at the others to spot some sort of shared relief. But it never came.

"People can change over the course of two months, Kawakami" Tetsu reminds him, but coherent for everyone else to let sink in, as he leans back in his seat with his arms folded. His eyes are sternly piercing each player on the field. Tetsu's aura intensifying when Ichidai struck out the first Yakushi batter.
As they go on, Sawamura's eyes flew to the scoreboard. *They got the first point at the bottom of the first inning...but allowed three points in the first and two in the second* he constructs with himself.

'They probably don't have Sanada pitching yet' Sawamura thought only to be snapped out of his gaze when a ball to the outfield is in play. The crowd cheers and Sawamura watches as the batter makes a move to first. But sadly, the fielders are faster and successfully retire the runner.

Sawamura hadn't realized he was on the edge of his seat until he scooted back. But something felt off about the crowd a second ago.

Even though they had just gotten here, it sounds like Ichidai had the crowd against them despite them winning.

'I wonder what happened in the first inning' Sawamura thought as he fiddled with his fingers nervously.

'Please win guys'

As the game continues, Sawamura never thought he would experience more near death experiences watching an intense game unfold before him. The score was still the same and it was only the seventh inning. Yakushi was batting now and the bases were loaded. They had gotten Ichidai's pitcher to work tremendously, tiring him out by the sixth. It came as a surprise when Yakushi was still having trouble scoring.

Speaking of Yakushi, Sawamura was even more unhinged when the coach wouldn't put Sanada in after many close calls with the current one. *Way to make a guy almost piss himself!*

But now the real fun was beginning. Raichi was up to bat, the perfect person to have in a situation like this.

Sawamura wanted to jump out of his seat and scream his friend's name to let him know he was watching him, but he didn't want to break Raichi's concentration nor did he want the other guys to give him weird looks like he was some sort of crazy fanboy.

Happy to have brought his camera, Sawamura begins taking pictures of him. He had been taking pictures of every moment including the two.

He watches with enthusiasm through the lens as Raichi hovers his bat over his shoulder. Then, when the ball left the pitcher's hand, Sawamura snapped the photo.

He looks up with a pleased smile as the ball ascends higher and higher until it shoots over the fence. Sawamura felt his cheeks burn when the crowd goes crazy for Raichi, who jogs the diamond with a notorious laugh echoing.

Sawamura only felt hotter when he watches Sanada hand Raichi his bat, high-fiving him at their now, inevitable victory.

"Damn" Jun clicks his tongue with annoyance at all the attention the one batter was getting.

The Seidou players had fallen silent, certain that Ichidai had an easy ticket into the next round. But now didn't seem like the case.

And from there, the game only gotten worse. After Raichi's homerun hit, Sanada laid an easy hit to the outfit from a meatball, and takes second base with ease. He scores the next point, but the game-changing inning finally ends with the game leading into the eighth inning with the pitchers finally
Sawamura felt his smile stretch when he saw Sanada jogging to the pitchers mound. The inning closes with swift strikeouts, giving his opponents little to no time to figure out the Yakushi player’s defenses. It became clear that like the others had been doing when they got there, the same happened to Ichidai. They were too overconfident about the unknown school that it caught them off guard. And like a dark horse, Yakushi came back on them with a burning passion to win.

"So that’s how you lose" Sawamura grins when he watches the faces of Ichidai’s players alter in defeat. "When your head is too high in the clouds." At least they knew what was coming for them.

"Sananda-senpai!" Sawamura cries out when he finds the said pitcher loitering in a gift shop alone when the ended ten minutes ago. The jet haired male seemed puzzled by the sudden mention of his name, but smiles when his eyes landed on the source.

"Eijun, what brings you here?" Sanada asked when the brunette jumps up and swipes the players hat from his head and sits it onto his own, making the taller male chuckle.

"The players from Seidou invited me, I am so happy you guys won!" Sawamura exclaims as he throws his arms around the pitcher, pulling him in a tight embrace.

"I am glad too, I kinda got worried, but with Raichi’s homerun it kind of shattered them" Sanada chuckles some more.

"Just proves to show that everyone wears a mask" he spoke softly as he glides his fingers on the outskirts of Sawamura’s frame. Heat exploded into his cheeks, but he doesn't move back or stop him. "You just got to rip it off of them” Sanada finishes with a hungry look, lusting for competition. The Yakushi player seemed like a whole new person when he acted this way. Sawamura kind of liked it.

"Y-Yeah" Sawamura nods before his eyes lit up. "Oh, I took your pictures! See!" Sawamura shows Sanada his camera that had been opened to the very first picture he took. He gives the pitcher time to scan through, smiling at every compliment showered onto him.

"You took a lot of pictures" Sanada comments as he finally gets to the last one of the team grouping into a victorious hug.

Failing to reign in his blush, Sawamura plays with his fingers, only timidly nodding because it was true. He did take a lot of pictures.

"Let’s take one together" Sanada blurts out, provoking a gasp from Sawamura. "Huh? Really?"

Sanada nods, no hint of him joking lurking in his face.

They find a spot to sit in the store, squishing into a seat together. Sanada wraps an arm around Sawamura’s neck so they are closer. Sawamura gives Sanada the camera since his arms were longer, than finds a position he is good with to finally break a smile and a small pose. The picture is taken after a good few seconds and the two checks it out with pleased faces.

"We look cute together" Sanada grins when he nudes Sawamura in the side.

Sawamura blushes madly. "Y-Yeah" he chews innocently at his lips, staring at the picture they had taken. It was a good picture, and what makes it better is that there is no sign of them having a
problematic lifestyle.

"You look really happy in this" Sanada says still ogling the cute look Sawamura posed into.

"W-Well" Sawamura squirms in his seat as he looks down at his lap.

Embarrassment flows to his face but the brunette didn't hesitate to say it.

"You make me very happy, Sanada-senpai" he tries to not blush, but it fails dramatically. Sanada stares down at him with a content look.

"You're cheesy, but I am glad I do" he says as he hands Sawamura back the camera. The male stretches, than yawns out, "Since we are admitting things than I might as well tell you something" Sanada says with a small grin, staring down at the awestruck figure beside him.

Sawamura hears him out, his nerves numbing himself that he couldn't even feel pain anymore.

"Ever since we met, Eijun" Sanada spoke, facing the brunette with tinted cheeks. The brunette blushes at the hearing of his first name. "The thought of you makes my pitches come to life"

Sawamura covers his cheeks that were melting from what he thought was actual fire. "I-I don't know why, but even though we just met, I have this feeling inside me that never wants to lose someone like you, you're special; someone that deserves to be treated like a king" Sawamura didn't know what to say. No one has told him all of these things before that it sounded like Sanada was speaking a whole new language. But it was made true.

Sanada was actually telling him how he had positively impacted him ever since they met in the bathroom. "A-And" he blushes as he diverts his eyes from the brunette. Sawamura's heart was ramming at his ribs from all of this being said. He couldn't contain the swell being dwelled on him.

"I want to be next to you someday, sitting on the throne as your king" Sawamura feels warmth envelope around his hand. Looking down, Sawamura is taken aback when he spots Sanada's hand entwined with his own.

"I am glad we hang out a lot, because the more I see you, the heavier I...feel for you? I don't know, it's complicated" he chuckles sheepishly. It was obvious he had never felt this way about anyone before.

"Y-Yeah, I know what you mean, I always feel like this when I am with you!" Sawamura tries to not be loud but he couldn't help it. Being with Sanada excited him.

"S-Sanada, I-"

"So, this is where you sneak off to?" An umbrage taken into consideration but the timbre ever so husky that it startled Sawamura to look beside him, his face white.

"M-Miyuki" Sawamura stammered, standing to his feet while snatching his hand from Sanada. He looks up at the Seidou catcher, though his gazed seemed to be fixated on another being.

"What are you doing here?" He asked with anxiety leaking in his tone, hands clamped onto the hem of shirt. Miyuki glares at Sanada, who only did the same but with a smirk.

"What do you think? I am on babysitting duty because you keep walking around like this is some damn playground" Miyuki grabs Sawamura's hand and gives it a tight squeeze. "S-Sorry, Miyuki, I was just trying to see a friend" the first year apologizes wholeheartedly, not knowing how to appease
Miyuki with his words deforming.

"Really?" Miyuki shot, manifesting dubiety thick to the core in his cadence. "A friend?" He derides, unimpressed.

Sawamura's lips thinned, brows tight and cheeks puffed. He didn't know what he could say other than the fact that he did come to see Sanada. Sawamura couldn't understand what there was to be mad about.

"Woah, chill out man, Eijun can do whatever he wants. You're not his mom" Sanada pipes up, standing as well so he is at Sawamura's aid.

The two made contact once again.

"Excuse me, who are you?" Miyuki barked with a threatening glare.

"Miyuki" Sawamura shakes the catcher's arm to get him to stop, but it didn't seem to work because the vein throbbing on his temple and the steam pouring from his ears: Miyuki was pissed.

"I'm not trying to start anything with you, but you just need to rest. At this point, you're well off being his nanny" Sanada says, eyes passionate about winning this little argument.

Sawamura couldn't believe the two were doing this, especially Miyuki. Why was he suddenly so defensive?

"And you're not my therapist to tell me to do so," Miyuki snaps.

Sanada rolls his eyes. "Sawamura, who is this?" He asked with a bored expression, he seemed to want to get this over with but what else could a little provoking do?

Acting like he didn't know about the scandalous Miyuki really seem to have struck a nerve on the catcher.

The first year tenses when the two looks at him. He hated the attention. He hated the way they were looking at him as if he could dissolve the situation. "He is just a friend" Sawamura hesitates with reticence.

"Are you sure? He acts like he is your overprotective brother" Sanada starts glaring at the Seidou catcher. "Not that your features are far apart either" he scoffs.

"I'm going to break every bone in his body" Miyuki says to Sawamura, but the first year keeps him down even though he knew Miyuki was strong enough to pull himself free.

"Please just stop! I thought we weren't at a park Miyuki, from what I can see you're the only one acting like a child!" Sawamura shouts, standing in front of him so he wouldn't hurt Sanada.

Miyuki pursed his lips, afraid to admittedly confess that he had been in the wrong. A few people had been watching from afar, hyped about two baseball players getting into it.

Miyuki looks away from Sawamura's intimidating glare, staring off madly at the floor with nothing to say. He was really frustrated, that Sawamura could decipher.

Cursing at himself, Miyuki looks at Sawamura with no ounce of woe. "Look, I don't care who this is to you, but we have to get back to the others or else we will miss the bus" he says as he yanks Sawamura closer to him.
"If that's all you came here to tell me then fine, let's go" Sawamura says then turns to Sanada with an apologetic look. "I am so sorry Sanada-senpai, I'll talk with you later, okay?" Sawamura sheepishly waves before being dragged away with a faint "Bye, Eijun" to be heard. He tries to ignore how stiff Miyuki had gotten at the mention of the name.

When they left the gift store Sawamura's expression changed. He glowers at Miyuki and snatches his hand away from the catcher a minute later.

"What the hell was that?" He barked when they stopped in a hallway far from the store.

Miyuki fought a guilty look off of his face. "Why did you do that, I am perfectly capable of doing things myself if you haven't noticed, can you not comprehend how embarrassing it was to be treated like some four year old by you?" Sawamura rambles on with so much infuriation pent up inside him.

"I don't care how you feel, you don't just wander around without telling anyone where you are going" Miyuki snaps back with clenched hands. Both of them seething at each other.

Sawamura madly blushes, the feeling mutual. "W-Why does it matter to you? It's not like you actually care what goes on in my life anyway" the first year frowns with his arms crossed over his chest. His attributes faltering into dismal.

Miyuki sighs heavily, shaking his head melancholy. "Let's just go, okay?" He regrips a hand around Sawamura's and pulls him along. Even though the first year wasn't done with the conversation, Sawamura decided it should end there. Enough crap has happened enough today.

They walk in relative silence, eventually breaking their hands away when they neared the exit. By the time they got outside, the parking lot was almost empty and their friends were nowhere to be found.

Sawamura watches as Miyuki pulls his phone out to call Kuramochi, let's assume.

"Where are you guys?" He asked impatiently, his voice dripping with dejection. While Miyuki drifted off somewhere to talk, Sawamura looks up at the sky when he hears thunder strike. The wind rate accelerates and microscopic beads of water prick at his skin.

The whether hadn't gotten cloudy till the end of the eighth inning. Sawamura didn't suspect it would rain, regretting that he didn't bring a jacket.

It wasn't until Sawamura felt cool wind swipe against his hair, sending shivers down his spine, that he touches his head than jumps when he turns around to see Sanada's hat flying around. "Oh no!" Sawamura holds onto his camera as he lightly runs around jumping for the hat, careful to not unnecessarily hurt himself.

When the hat drops to the floor, it spirals back up by the time the brunette is bending down, and when the hat is flailing in the air the hat either goes too high or flies in another direction.

Guiding himself to the hat proved to be the hardest with the rain jabbing into his eyes.

Eventually, he had ended up walking a great amount of distance from Miyuki to not even see him when he checked to make sure the stadium was still behind him.

Sawamura wipes at his face, his eyes burning from the dripping contents. When the hat lands onto the ground --and the wind had stopped blowing-- Sawamura runs for it and picks up the hat, fitting it onto his head, astonished it was still mostly dry. "Better!" He grins with a cheesy smile as he
positions the hat backwards so that the brim of the hat was behind him.

Looking sideways, Sawamura notices he is in the road and quickly steps back in time for a car passing by to spray him with the help of a large puddle standing idly by the sidewalk, covering his camera just in time. Drenched entirely with water, Sawamura waddles back to where Miyuki was just hanging up the phone.

He didn't really being mind being wet since his belongings weren't ruined. That was all that mattered.

With one look given, Miyuki shook his head in disappointment. "How the hell did you get wet?" He tries to keep his voice low, but after this satanic day, it only seemed to want to worsen to make them miserable.

"A-A car s-sprayed me" Sawamura shivers while hugging himself for warmth. It wasn't a lot of water but with the mixture of wind and rain being sprayed on top of his soaked clothes, he was freezing.

Miyuki pulls Sawamura back so they are underneath the stadium and begins to pull his jacket off. "Apparently, Kuramochi and the rest thought we were on the bus with them and a few others said they saw us get on a different bus" Miyuki begins as he pulls off the article from over his head, a golden necklace of a bird getting caught up in the hoodie. He fiddled it off, then Miyuki hides his necklace inside of his plain black tee.

Not sparing Sawamura anymore looks, he drops his jacket on Sawamura's head, banning his vision temporarily.

"T-Thanks" Sawamura mutters softly, eyes falling onto the red jacket that slipped down his head. Miyuki doesn't say anything, only busies himself into his phone.

Diffidently, Sawamura begins to apply the jacket onto him feeling the warmth encase him. Miyuki was warm. The camera around his neck that had been sprinkled with water is tucked in neatly beneath the jacket, and his phone is kept with Miyuki's in the pocket holder when he no longer needs it.

"The last bus to come here left as soon as we came out, leaving us with the only option to walk back to campus...all because you were talking to some guy" Miyuki snorts as he begins to walk into the rain.

Sawamura gwacks with his jaw slacked. He couldn't believe Miyuki was blaming him for them being left behind. "You didn't have to come find me you know!" Sawamura shouts through the heavy rain, stomping begrudgingly behind with an irritated look plastered on his face.

"And risk becoming roadkill by the team? Yeah right" Sawamura could hear the lethargy in his voice. The dread of not wanting to go through a whole entire team because he didn't do what he was told.

Silence renders by as the two walk through the streets. Miyuki seemed to be walking as if he knew his way around, and with the many people on the streets, Sawamura stayed in close pursuit of the brunette in front of him. But Miyuki was walking fast. "Well sorry it's only my fault" Sawamura snapped sourly, pulling the hoodie of the jacket over his head when he felt the hat being pulled off of his head again.

"I know right" Miyuki scoffs from ahead adamant of Sawamura being the one to blame.

"You're the worst" Sawamura hits Miyuki softly in his back. Watching as the rain soaks at the
catcher's bare skin. His shirt is dripping endlessly, and his arms and neck shun from the substance.

Fuming, Sawamura looks away with his hands stuffed in the pocket, eyes looking anywhere but at Miyuki.

"Whatever" Miyuki utters.

"What is wrong with you? Why are you acting like I am some annoying fangirl?" Sawamura asked as he catches up with Miyuki's pace, tired from the walking they were doing. They had only been walking for ten minutes but his legs were aching. He felt like his legs were going to give out. "Just be quiet, Sawamura, I don't want to talk about this" Miyuki admits through a stressed sigh as they stop at a red light.

Sawamura has to place his fingers on Miyuki's back to prevent from colliding into him. The catcher flinches, but doesn't do anything about it.

'He called me by my resident name...Miyuki must be mad' Sawamura thought silently as he follows behind Miyuki again when they cross the street. He didn't seem to want to be bothered and he was heated ever since his encounter with Sanada.

Instead of asking any questions that would bother Miyuki, Sawamura remains quiet for the entirety of the walk until they finally got to Seidou.

A whole hour from now.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you guys enjoyed the chapter! Hope to god it doesn't take me two weeks to upload...I try to be consistent / y'know?
Provoked

Chapter Summary

Kuramochi has love problems to resolve and Miyuki has issues to settle.

Chapter Notes

Omg sorry I haven't updated in so long!! Time is too fast and too many events keep popping up. Plus my birthday past (even though you all might not care) but I'm 16 now! Yay!!

Anyway, forget me, enjoy the chapter! I tried to make it a bit longer but...I don't know.

Tehuh, bye!!

By the time they had gotten back to the dorms night had long donned upon them. Beads of rain trickles down on them, both drenched from head to toe from the rain shower. The school looked different when in such a gloomy setting. To Sawamura, it felt like they were breaking in as he watched Miyuki reel open the steel gates that led to the dorms.

Neither of them uttered a word for the rest of the walk. They only listened to the strident, sharp noise of cars breaking on immense puddles filling the streets; the weird feeling of their socks squishing into their soaked shoes with every initiated step, and the thunder that shook the sky.

It was an awkward silence. Thicker than the mud that somehow blanketed the ground more than the grass.

Sawamura didn't ask no questions--or anything for the matter that could possibly disable their relationship now unstable and unrequited.

His mind drifts as they walk, and Sawamura listens to the faint noise of their dewy footsteps as they walk. And then suddenly the shower hardens.

Sawamura pulls at the hoodie so that his face is covered, finding Miyuki settling under the rooftops of the dorms from a quick jog over. He follows, almost slipping into him when lightening flash across his vision. The brunette's voice hitches as thunder rips through his ears, and he clings onto the wet sleeve for comfort, his eyes following over to Miyuki who wipes a hand down over his sodden face.

When Miyuki turns he almost pauses when his eyes meet with Sawamura's. The first year's stomach lurched unexpectedly. He had been anticipating some sort of saying or at least a gesture, even if he was the one implicating his gratification for getting them back home safely.

But that doesn't come close to the cut. Miyuki makes a repulsive look as if he smelt something rotten, then curtly continues on.
Speechless, Sawamura sheepishly follows, cheeks burning with infuriation that he gave him such a look. Kicking an invisible pebble, Sawamura sequestered his hands into the folds of the jacket until he felt their phones. Oh, yeah.

"We're here," Miyuki says soporifically, his arms shrouding over himself for warmth. He seemed to be fighting the urge to shake. Sawamura almost felt guilty. He had been hogging the jacket for the entire duration of the walk without offering. A sharp pain penetrates his system as he catches Miyuki staring at him indifferently.

Sawamura raises a brow, then dumbly turns around to see that they had reached his dorm room. Oh.

"T-Thanks" Sawamura mutters, pulling at the handle nervously. He feels Miyuki's gaze burning through the jacket to scorch his neck. Even with how cold and windy it was Sawamura's body itched all over in apprehension, and his insides melted with a sudden dread.

He hands Miyuki his phone when he is over the threshold, and goes to remove the jacket when he hears, "don't worry about it," and looks up to see Miyuki stuffing his phone in his butt pocket while still eyeing him.

"Keep it for the night" he said almost willingly. "Just be sure to return it after you wash it"

Sawamura twiddles with his fingers. Of course he had something coming his way. When did he ever get things for free?

Timidly, Sawamura nods at the implanted proposal. "O-Okay, t-thanks ag-again you know...you didn't have to give me your jacket" Sawamura tries to bite back on the blush spreading to his cheeks. Maybe it could have been mistaken for the cold, or the burning sensation of the acidic rain connecting with his skin. Whether it could be played off as a mere deception was not really of the latter's concern.

"And yet," said Miyuki, both of their eyes meeting at his hoarse voice cutting the tension. "You still wear it without protest" a small supercilious smirk breaking his lips.

Sawamura hiccups inside, slightly jumping at the ostentatious grin he was being fed by the Seidou catcher. Now, he was fuming. "I-I am not greedy! You could have asked for it if you were cold you know" Sawamura snapped with pursed lips.

Miyuki clicks his tongue while perpetually looking the male up and down, watching as he helplessly tries to claim his innocence with more rants. Rolling his eyes, Miyuki begins to walk away, causing more anger to stir into the younger brunette. "Miyuki Kazuya!"

"Shh! You're being annoyingly loud, and don't say my full name" He walks away without another word, and Sawamura tries to act abrasive about it even though Miyuki was no longer in sight.

"He's such a jerk" Sawamura closes the door to his room, finally taking in the oppressive silence that numbed him whole. His body ached tiredly, screaming to be stretched out from such a long walk. Sawamura's breath is uneven but anchored enough to not be in need of his medicine.

Finally, after what felt like several unendurable minutes, which ended to be three, Sawamura hauls himself up and limps to his bed. His legs buckle as he collapse, unable to find the will to pull them over on the bed all the way so they could be made of no use in a more comfortable position.
But he couldn't do so much to his debilitated body, and conscious--whatever he had left of it. Instead, Sawamura wrenches himself to lay propped up against his pillows, pulling at the drenched red jacket that had clung to his body with such desire to stay on. Then, he manages to successfully kick his shoes and socks off before wiping himself free of his own clothes, being left in his briefs only.

Sawamura yearned for a long hot shower, but he wasn't in the substantial mental state to walk all the way to the east side of the integral quarter of the school to go take a shower. And with the rain, yeah, he wasn't going anywhere until morning when he hoped the whether would best suit his standards.

Not bothering to change into any spare clothes, Sawamura envelopes himself with his blankets, eyes clinging tightly together to distract his mind from the unwanted coldness that keeps shriveling in.

And soon, he plunges into a heap of darkness, Sawamura's body falling dormant into the benighted milieu he so humbly enjoyed; the comfort of his bed.

The next day strolls by with tension. Despite the small reconciliation act to lighten the mood between them Sawamura and Miyuki had both been clearly avoiding each other. When they bumped into each other on their way out of the dorms it had been kind of awkward. As much as Sawamura wanted to say something to let Miyuki know he was sorry for letting them walk in the rain he heavily struggled to find the right words to vocalize. A strong part of him mostly wanted Miyuki to apologize first because he was part of the main reason why they even missed the bus. 'If he had just came in and told me we had to go without causing any attention only then..." Sawamura had thought.

But Miyuki apologizing first was like Sawamura being able to play a sport he was committed to. And he wasn't committed to any sports. It just wasn't going to happen. Even though Sawamura didn't need the additional drama he did want to try to clear the air with the Seidou catcher.

Catching glares in the halls was always awkward. Sawamura could be talking with Haruichi and Furuya and would absentmindedly stare out of course to find Miyuki looking right back at him. He has caught him in a few occasions but sometimes it was reversed and Miyuki would be the one to catch him staring.

Sawamura had to admit, he'd be wrong if he said he wasn't feeling a bit sad that their relationship was rocky as it is. As much as he tries to be friendly to elevate their relationship it only seems to dampen and worsen the more he tried. He found out quite an eventful way.

Seventh period sweeps around and Sawamura is spaced out, his body hunched over with pent up mopery and fingers lifelessly tapping against the base of his desk unrelenting.

He was suppose to be doing something that involved editing or redrafting his spread for community service and baseball, but the brunette had no intention of even touching his laptop that he had brought with him for the day.

All of the others have been doing so with ease while concomitantly chatting away with each other. It was good to see that they were doing well at least. But the same couldn't be said to the brooding first year.

He had been in deep thought that whole day trying to brush off the little conflict induced by his frustration. But it was hard to just forget the fight ever happened. It may not have been serious but Sawamura didn't like Miyuki's unremitting mental reorientation. He just didn't understand him anymore like how he use to.
But even before they weren't as close as peanut butter and jelly. In fact, if Sawamura could remember well he still didn't like Miyuki even during elementary. He had been jealous of him, actually, and he knew why. Growing up, Sawamura didn't really have everything he wanted as a child.

"Sawamura-kun, are you okay?" Sawamura jumps when he looks up to see the redhead female that had suddenly materialized in front of him. A look of worry twist onto her face when their eyes met, concern ripe on her features and a thread of care entwining with her words. Sawamura hesitates to answer, unsure if he should even respond to her.

Haruno was, to say, the least informed friendly figure that hung around him. Even though she sided with Haruichi and Toujou in being the most warmhearted people he knew of Haruno wasn't the type of person he was comfortable with spilling things with.

Not that she couldn't help him. They just wasn't close enough to orate on such a level.

He only weakly smiles, wishing they were close for him to speak up. But he politely dismisses her with an "I'm okay" response while ignoring the unconvinced look she sheltered. She doesn't urge him to answer though, and can only painfully smile back as she adjust the weight of her two notebooks in hand.

Haruno strings a lock of hair behind her shoulder. "Well, okay then. You can always check in with me if you need anything" she says amicably, like any tender and kindhearted person would. Some sort of apology finds it's way out of Sawamura's throat.

When two girls call her over Haruno's red eyes snap down to meet with the melancholic golden ones. "See ya" she wiggles her fingers at the brunette then skips off to regroup with her friends.

Once she is out of sight, Sawamura's lips dip into a frown and he goes back to finding some kind of amusement by tapping the desk. Even though his friends that were nearby found it quite irksome, the brunette ignores their imporing request for him to stop--but he never heard them.

Too deep into thought, Sawamura hadn't realized he was slowly digging a trench into his own isolationism. Not that he mind either.

For the rest of class Sawamura remained in his slump mood, repeating how the adversity scene at the stadium played out in his head. At one point Haruichi asked if he was alright and needed someone to talk with, but the first year denies the offer and goes back to mulling.

Some of the others contemplated on checking on the first year but all unspokenly agreed to let him be and hope time cures whatever woe he was feeling.

Which was the better option regardless. When class ends Sawamura stands to his feet and drags his bag over his shoulder. He is ready to end the Friday and just lay in his bed sleeping for the most part, but he knew he couldn't allow that to pass.

Not when--

"Hey, Eijun-kun!" Haruichi barges in the way of the threshold when the brunette is almost out the door. Sawamura makes an annoyed look, but steps back then peeks over his shoulder to see that they were the only ones partially left in class aside from Mr. Ochai, and he had been reading a book for the past hour that he was seemingly intrigued in. "Um, hey?" Sawamura tries to smile but fails. He certainly wasn't a fan of the way the pinklet was eyeing him.

"You seemed down today" Haruichi starts, batting his lashes through his fringes as he pokes his
friend in the nose to attempt at cheering him up. The little beam is ephemeral, and seconds later another frown delineates his lips. "I-I do?" Sawamura stammers. He tries to play it off that he hadn't really notice and would hope to get by with the little white lie. The brunette twist a lock of his hair between his thumb and index while biting on his lips.

The smaller pinklet shakes his head as a definite 'yes'. "Look, I don't know what is going on with you whether it's your spread or perhaps Miyuki...?" A pause gaps his next saying, as if waiting for confirmation. But none came. "But even if you don't want to tell it sickens me to know I can't do much but go off of your sour expressions" he chuckles cutely, a pink iris displaying through a slit in his bangs. Sawamura grumbles at the last part, though keeps his lips sealed.

"Sooo" he sings delicately, inching closer to when their bodies were almost touching. Sawamura steps back a bit creeped out. He was skeptical to see where this was going, but a big part of him largely wanted to really get to his bed and just...mope. "So..?" Sawamura raised a concerned -- slightly-- agogic brow.

"Tomorrow at twelve you will be coming with us to the movies" Haruichi declares, nudging himself into the brunette with supplicating eyes. Sawamura makes a displeased noise. He hadn't really set it to be ideal but he had planned to go visit his parents to help out with the restaurant. He had been receiving updates from Wakana that the place had been packed recently and that they could use a few hands. But now...he was being asked out to go to the movies.

"I-I will?" Sawamura scratches at the back of his neck in ambivalence. Uncertainty drenched his tone and worry plastered his face. Being apart of the little get together wasn't much of a desire of his.

"Do I have to? I sort of have a..." Sawamura trails off remembering that these were his friends. His clueless friends that didn't know he use to travel from Nagano to here on a daily, was unaware he had a job, and didn't know of any problems he was facing with right now. Looking into Haruichi's eyes now, he could feel the pressure of having to suppose to go.

A frail smile outlines his lips and a defeated sigh escapes his lips. "Fine..." He chimes, but smiles when he watches Haruichi's face brighten. "Great! Make sure you bring money, kay?" Haruichi gives him a tight squeeze of a hug then runs away to most likely meet up with the others.

When he is gone, Sawamura felt his shoulders drop. "I guess going wouldn't be bad..." his clammy fingers sketch down his veins, homely addressing the sudden tightness welling inside. A tight lump shrivels down his throat as he begins to walk in the direction of the dorms.

He wasn't keen about going, nor would he feel bad about 'accidentally' missing the allotted time he was suppose to arrive at. It didn't much matter to him. But if the others needed some sort of authentication to show that he was doing fine then he might as well show up.

Another sigh leaves his parted lips when Sawamura makes it outside. The wind pressed heavenly against his warm skin, cooling whatever trouble currently making him tense. It cooled his mind, that was for sure. And for the whole walk the windy, fall like weather puts him at ease. It was a pleasing feeling for the most part. Sawamura wished he could enjoy it longer if being trouble free felt like that. But moments like those only come so often.

Sawamura gets to the dormitories minutes later. He sets his bag down in his room and changes into an oversized gray sleeve with black shorts. He figured he try to accommodate some of the players just cause. There was more Sawamura could take advantage of while he was living there.

He stays for another few minutes to soak in the fact that it was Friday and he should maybe try to relax. But even that seemed difficult when he was hiding so much.
He tries to not think about it. Sawamura runs out the room with his camera, and then begins walking when he hears the habitual sound of balls hitting the bat. He slowly walks to the entrance of a building, finding the door docked ajar by an empty bucket. Shrugging, Sawamura slips inside to see the regulars practicing away from the other players.

It was hot inside. Really hot. Sweat and musk circulated the room that the guys didn't seem to realize. But why would they complain about such a smell stuck to them? They were use to sweating like this. Use to living like this.

Some of them seemed to have gotten the hint because half of them had their shirts off. None of the coaches seemed to be around which could conclude that they were letting the players have time to themselves.

"They are really over working themselves...I am going to get them some water". Unnoticed, Sawamura slips out and hurries over to the Seidou Spirit cafeteria. It wasn't a long trip, but it was adventurous to see some of the other guys.

"Hey, Eijun-kun!" The girls greeted Sawamura in unison-- Sachiko turning around from inside the kitchen with a bag of ice in hand. "H-Hey" Sawamura shyly waves, entering the kitchen to fairly greet them.

"Need anything?" Yui asked when she closes the fridge after pulling out two cartons of eggs. "Um, yes, actually" he blushes, unsure if it was from the heat or because he would be pitching in to help the girls who usually teased him about being a manager on some occasions.

Takako claps her hands together with ecstasy. "What is it? It would be great if you could do a few other things as well! It takes all of us to cook so we usually forget the task asked of us" she beseeches. Heat crawls around Sawamura's neck. There were other times where the girls continuously complained about hiring guys to volunteer but most played other sports or just didn't care. Using Sawamura while he was specifically only there to take pictures was their best bet.

"O-Okay, I don't mind. I was just going to go give the guys water" Sawamura tells, grabbing a clean bucket of already filled ice. A box of half empty water bottles laid around the back corner of the kitchen. Sawamura steadily begins to fill the bucket.

"If you don't mind" Yui bends down beside him to help put in more water. Her voice soft.

"I suppose" Sawamura agrees. "What is it I have to do?" He asked inquisitively. He struggles to lift the bucket and set it on the kitchen table but no one seemed to notice.

The girls went all at once. "Do you mind making sure there are at least 50 balls in each bucket" Takako starts.

"And that the bats are all cleaned and orderly" Yui went next.

"Remake the fields" Takako butts in.

"Water the fields first" Sachiko adds.

"Clean the dugouts, ice some of the players, set up the stat books..." The list goes on, and Sawamura is sure his brain is doing flips to catch up. He caught half of what was being told to him, but then it was lost when he found out that there was still more to do. He couldn't believe this is what they had to do almost everyday.

They fell breathless when they were done, each panting for air as if they had ran a mile. Sawamura
blinks back in surprise. Who knew the girls were so treacherous. That behind those powdered faces was women trying to do less by taking advantage of him. Or more so have less on their plate.

"We don't expect you to do all of them of course" Takako Breathes out when she begins cleaning a knife she would be using to cook later on. "But it would also be nice to know we have someone on our side willing to aid us" she turns to the sink, full attention set on finishing some of the dishes.

Sawamura blinks back with doubt. He wasn't sure if he could be their stress reliever, but he would try his best.

"I'll see what I can do" he chuckles, then waves them off as he carries the bucket of water bottles away. "Thanks, Sawamura-kun, you're the best!" Sachiko grins.

Sawamura huffs when he made it outside. "Anything to make you guys work less...I guess I could distract myself" he continues to struggle with the heavy bucket. He didn't know water would be this tough to carry when packed together. Then again it's not like anyone could carry the ocean.

The venture back was twice as hard. Sawamura took breaks, slipped, and would pull on the bucket without it even moving an inch. It was bothering him very quickly much to his now burning red hands. Sawamura groans aloud when he stumbles back after another tug. A loud yelp articulates out his mouth, and instead of falling into the muddy mildew, Sawamura found himself relaxed in muscular arms.

His eyes quickly flew up to meet with those of Kuramochi's. Now his body was detoxed of any uneasiness within him. "You've got to learn when to stop falling for me" Kuramochi evilly grins as he lifts the gushing latter on his feet.

"I rather have my face smudged in the dirt" The brunette retorts as he regrips onto the steel handle of the bar. "Tch, as if. Need any help by the way?" Kuramochi asked, stepping closer to the male from behind.

Sawamura fumes. "No, I got it"

"You sure?" Kuramochi says with surprise.

The brunette nods, then turns to face the shirtless male that had previously been with the other regulars in the common training area. He knew he was out of line to say this about his big brother, but Kuramochi had a whole strengthen six-pack with stone like arms. The sweat cloaking his body made him look like a shiny trophy. Sawamura gulps, reluctantly turning back to pull on the handle.

"Y-Yes, now leave me alone. Don't you have practice with the others?" He barked.

An impish sneer clouds the shortstops weary facade. "Do you ever listen?" Kuramochi curtly chuckles, pushing the brunette aside when he nugatorily pulls on the handle. The younger male hissed at the stinging contact of the hot handle rubbing against his palm.

"What do you mean?" Sawamura whines, wiping his hands frantically in the air to rid of the burning pain.

An amused laugh could be heard from the shortstop as he lifts the bucket with ease. "I mean stop talking to me like I am Miyuki" he reiterates, eyes hot with shielded anger. If he had to admit, Kuramochi didn't like when he talked to him that way.

Sawamura's face randomly twisted. "$I-I..." He couldn't find any words to rebuttle with. He doesn't mean to try to sound the same or compare the two together. Nor did he think it offended him to have his name on the same sentence as his. This did have him thinking though.
"I know you do it unintentionally, but I rather tell you now then have you do it often" Kuramochi's face tightened with animosity. Sawamura slowly nods. "Do you...hate Miyuki, Cheetah-senpai? You don't seem to like him" Sawamura asked. He knew it wasn't an appropriate topic to discuss but he wanted to know.

Kuramochi falls stiff in place. He takes in a quick breath. "I don't know...." He pauses for a moment, gathering his thoughts. "One moment we are best friends then the next he's...weird? I don't know. Like I said, that twisted fuck has split personalities" the shortstop scolds before walking off.

Sawamura follows in tow, eyes gazing over Kuramochi's body. "You mentioned that last time...about his personality. Is it true?" The brunette asked warily.

"I said I didn't want to tell unless I have it confirmed" Kuramochi bites. Sawamura jumps at his tone but finds the audacity to ask more questions even though he knew he might not get anything out of it.

"Have what confirmed?" He pestered.

Kuramochi briefly converts his eyes. "Don't worry about it--"

"Kuramochi" Sawamura jogs in front of him, stopping the player from entering the building short ahead. His eyes intently met with those of the shortstops'. The brunette tries to not be easily pressured with a strong glare.

"Tell me" The first year urges, eyes filled with worry.

Kuramochi curses at himself over and over. "You better not say a thing. Okay?" He plants the bucket of water down inside the building and announces to the others soon after. While they drink, Kuramochi drags Sawamura away, where he was sure they wouldn't be heard.

The game that was suppose to take place that day had been rescheduled due to some incident with the other school. Sawamura had entirely forgotten about the game until it was brought up that late afternoon during dinner time. Some of the guys had been lucky, admitting that they weren't ready. But if you were Jun, you could imagine him hiding his anxiety through his screams. He had been making a rucus that whole afternoon until Tetsu finally got him to shut up.

Sawamura would be lying if he didn't let it known that he loved this comical side of the team. In moments where the guys were against each other something interesting always happens.

He wasn't the only one who thought that. "Do you think this is Jun's way of letting us know he was nervous?" Kawakami asked when Tetsu dragged Jun out from another outburst. The guys loitering around the table only replies with short answers. "Who knows" Miyauchi heavily exhales, cheeks puffed out.

"If anything Jun being nervous is when he is actually quiet" Tanba snorts, eating at his rice hungrily while the others stifled their laughter. "I guess you're right" Kawakami agrees with a small laugh himself.

They all continue to eat and talk. Each having something new to bring up every time the conversation condenses. Sawamura tries to talk much, but he is already worn out from the load of work he did by himself. Courtesy of the managers.
His muscles were crying out in pain and his dried throat etched for something to drink. Even now he was still panting from the running he had been doing. Sawamura didn't get to all of the task, but he finished majority of them.

On top of his wheezing self came the thick phlegm that secreted itself to the back of his throat. He didn't know when he had started sneezing and having a runny nose, but it seemed small. While the others went about talking, Sawamura --paying no mind-- found himself resting on his arms, eyes subconsciously fixated on the secluded Seidou catcher barely eating at his food.

Even though his stomach begged to eat a surplus amount of salad, rice, and fish, his mind couldn't find any determination to lift a spoon up and just eat. What Kuramochi told him earlier kept sizzling in his head and it wouldn't get out.

As if knowing he was being watched Miyuki looks over and their eyes meet. Sawamura does an obvious jump, struck with fear that Miyuki wouldn't let him see the end of it for watching him. He'd hate to be accused of staring but...really?

Sawamura was still a bit shaken up from what Kuramochi still told him, and no doubt he was trying to hide himself away so he wouldn't see his childhood nuisance in a new light. Though they were never really on good terms Sawamura was more use to the male being an ass than anything else.

Bipolar. That was the word that laid on the outskirts of his mind. Sawamura would have never guessed it. But looking at Miyuki now made it too obvious.

The mood swings was a big symptom. A dead giveaway. Though, of course, it was just a theory. He and Kuramochi could never really find out unless Miyuki outright tells them. But who would ask that?

Sawamura was sure his life would end with a single glare—that was all it took. But Kuramochi...he was another story. He could do lots of things to make Miyuki surrender if he didn't succumb to whatever unhidden potential Miyuki had been veiling to unleash.

"You okay, Sawamura?" Shirasu snapped the male out of his trance with a single phrase, his deep voice startling him into reality. The brunette stammers repeatedly, pulling a loose lock behind his ear to distract himself. His cheeks flare up red promptly and he straightens himself up when all eyes fall on him.

Timidly, Sawamura gushes. "I-I am fine. Honestly" he answers with a hand animatedly waving at them. "Really? You seem really sad" Kawakami points out the obvious. Now, being made public, that something had been going on to make the usually boisterous male quiet.

Only then Sawamura realized how many people were keeping tabs on him. He sighs, then sways his finger in a circular motion on the table as he stares at his plate. "I'm good, really--"

"If he says he's fine then he is" Kuramochi cuts in. His voice was intense and more profound than normal and his stature is more stiffed. "Now leave it. It doesn't do any good pestering him" his voice is strained as he says this. Normally, anyone would thank a guy from getting the attention off of them. But that wasn't the case this time around. Sawamura was more concerned for Kuramochi if anything. Had he been second guessing his decisions? Had he wondered if he went wrong telling him about Miyuki possibly being bipolar?

Sawamura didn't want Kuramochi to think he made a bad decision. He had no intentions of telling anyone either. This was a serious matter. A team member having constant mood swings and aggressive behavior was to be noted of. Does coach know? What would happen if the others were to
find out?

Kuramochi told him not to worry about it and to just pretend it was nothing. But was it really? If he was right, Kuramochi seems just as deeply concerned as he was. And they both hated Miyuki's guts to the highest degree.

"Hm" Kawakami sighs almost with disappointment. He drums his fingers at the temple of his head, a small grin lining his face. "Sounds like you've learned a little something" he grins and contains a laugh when Kuramochi slams his fist on the table.

"What's that suppose to mean?!" The shortstop rambles, stretching his body over the table and grabbing the average height pitcher in a chokehold. Sawamura flinches at the outburst, more shocked of how loud the sound of Kuramochi's fist connecting with the table made. "I'm sure you would have known your place shortly, but now you're going around telling people not to do the same as you did? What a joke!" A snort comes out, and Kuramochi is close to ripping Kawakami's throat out.

Sawamura, worriedly, stands to his feet contemplating if he should help or not. Having to experience one of his famous chokeholds really put a damper on his motives. "Um...Kuramochi, Kawakami is turning blue" Shirasu points out anxiously.

"It's called cyanosis, don't fuck with me" Kuramochi tightens his hold on the struggling pitcher. Sawamura stifles a small laugh. "What is this about?" The brunette mischievously grins, awake from his depressing state.

Kuramochi seemed to have forgotten that Sawamura was there because his face whitens and his hold on Kawakami loosens. His face blows up with a mix of fury and anguish. "I-It doesn't matter!" He exclaims, fist clenched and brow abroad his forehead. His eyes are bulging out and now he seemed scared for his life.

This had peeked the first years interest. "You didn't tell your little brother?" Miyauchi huffs, now playing along with the charade as Kawakami scrambles to the seat beside the second string catcher to catch his breath.

Sawamura's nose twitched. He really had been waiting to see what it was that had Kuramochi so overwhelmed. "Why would I--? I mean it doesn't matter, b-but why would he care?!" Kuramochi sputters. Oh, he was a mess.

"I care" Sawamura shifts his gaze to look at the gaping male. Kuramochi makes an inhumane noise, then stands upright and scratches a finger at his cheek. He was nervous. Definitely. "You're my older brother, why wouldn't I?" He blinks innocently. The painted grin on his plump lips seemed deceptive, and his kiddy face as a whole-- Fuck. He was cute. And if he would Sawamura could get away with anything if he tried. No doubt his little brother was a hunk.

"I-It's embarrassing" Kuramochi'a voice is filtering weak. Sawamura could tell the shortstop was feeling pressured to admit whatever he had on his chest. But he wasn't going to care if this made him feel less of himself or not.

"Then...want to tell me in my room? Let's go!" Sawamura bounced with content. He had already threw their trash out and was speeding back, cupping a hand over the latter's wrist and pulls him forward.

"Sawamura" Kuramochi groans when he almost trips over his own feet. He manages to catch himself somehow and jogs behind Sawamura with his arm dangling in his hand, leaving the group of three baffled at the sudden departure, though they didn't seem to mind either.
Their breathes and the rapid peddling of their feet hitting the ground fills their ears. Kuramochi didn't know what the excitement was about the news he had to tell but it had Sawamura actually running breathless. Wait. "Sawamura, s-stop or you'll--"

"I'm fine!" Sawamura shouts through the wind blowing at their ears. The older male spots a smile breaking the brunette's lips. He was happy. He wasn't sure what for but it was better than seeing him mope around.

They get to the dorms pretty quickly. And by then they are both tired; Sawamura more exhausted. He glances over to check on Kuramochi, only to see the shortstop staring back at him with a neutral look.

Sawamura skips inside when the door is pulled open. Kuramochi closes it behind him while the other male puts the TV on. He then jumps onto his bed and kicks his shoes off, scooting over for Kuramochi to have room.

"So..." Sawamura hums as he lays back in his bed, still trying to catch his breath. Kuramochi kicks his own shoes off and sits on the edge of the bed, eyes spectating the small figure. "Are you more comfortable telling me now?" He rolls over on the bed, nearly kicking Kuramochi in his face as he grabs at a nearby pillow and squeezes the item in his chest.

A gush flutters out. Sawamura lifts his head from the pillow to get a better view of the clearly flustered male. "I guess so" he sighs then makes a face when Sawamura wiggles his coated toes at his side. Kuramochi holds onto his feet and pushes them away. But the brunette lightly thrusted them back into his side.

"Then tell me" Sawamura pouts as he throws himself back up. Locks of his disheveled hair sprawls over his forehead making it seem like he just came out of a nap. Kuramochi snorts, then pinches the latter's big toe, making Sawamura jump in surprise.

"Was there someone you were pestering around with or something?" He raised a brow, dropping a hand down over his knee that had been pulled up to his chest.

Kuramochi bites back on his lips. "Promise not to laugh? The others pretty much know but you of all people shouldn't laugh" he practically pleads. Sawamura sniggers at the request. "Who knows" he shrugs as he rolls his eyes. "Maybe you might choke me before I can" he chuckles, being rewarded with another pinch, this time to the skin on his leg.

"Ah!" He winces, shooting a dirty look at the green haired male. "You didn't have to pinch me hard, it hurts" Sawamura complains as he leans forward to rub at the inflicted area.

"Then be a good brother" Kuramochi glares at him. "And listen."

Sawamura purses his lips. He goes to lay back but a sneeze interrupts him and he flails backwards, hitting the softener of the pillow. A groan escapes his throat. "Ugh" he wipes at his nose. "Go on".

"Ryou-san" the name came out with avidity. The shortstop suddenly seemed more rekindled. It was like electricity was spewing through his body. He was more awake now than before. The name
alone holding content. Sawamura gushes as he hides his face in the pillow he was holding.

"I hung around him and the other guys a lot" he shifts in his spot. "But mainly Ryou-san"
Kuramochi looked nervous. He wasn't making perfect eye contact like before and his body was shaking more.

Sawamura perked up at the last bit of information. "Oni-san?" He recites. Kuramochi nods. "Yeah, your Oni-san" he begins playing with the waves in the blankets.

"When I first came to Seidou they paired me up with Ryou-san to see how we handled working together in field" Kuramochi begins, a vein throbbing on his head at the rage inducing period of his lifetime he swears he can never forget.

"We weren't....as compatible as we are now" Sawamura's eyes widen. "Did you two suck?" The brunette had asked, enthralled. "Nothing was wrong with Ryou-san, like always. He's perfect. However, I wasn't as good as I thought I was to be his partner" disappointment wavers. This was news to the first year.

"Then how did you become partners in the first place?" Sawamura asked. Kuramochi looks over at him, mindlessly shrugging. "I practiced my ass off" he winces when he thinks back to the time of hardships he had to endure to get where he is.

A snort followed. An expected answer from such a guy. "I did everything to make sure I was the one by Ryou-san's side. Not much of the guys who wanted our positions like us, but I didn't care. We brushed off insults as swiftly as our double-plays" Kuramochi boasted proudly. He stands to his feet and stretches than looks back over at Sawamura for a brief moment before looking at the TV.

Something inside Sawamura dropped. Kuramochi and Kominato were hated by the second and third stringers as well?

That was a topic to rethink. Surely, he would have thought that Miyuki was the one everyone held a grudge against. But even so many had been trying to weaken the impeccable iron wall?

"I guess Miyuki isn't the only one.." His heart hammers hardly against his chest. All he was thankful for was that Kuramochi had still been staring at the TV to pay his pained face much mind.

"So not much of the other players like you either?" Sawamura couldn't help but asked. Sadness clinging to his throat.

Kuramochi lays his hands on his waist, shrugging. "Not really. Even some people found a way to dislike Tetsu, and that's hard" he throws his hands up in the air, stretching his arms out this time.

"But anyway, I hung around Ryou-san a lot not to just gloat or reimburse my respects for him" Kuramochi chews back on his lips, shifting the weight of his legs on either side as he drops his arms down. "I guess you could say I--"

"You like Oni-san?!" Sawamura vociferates, a big smile spreading across his lips. The pillow he held now sat between his legs. The accusation makes Kuramochi flinch.

"L-Like Ryou-san...?" Kuramochi spits out in disbelief but falls quiet when he hears himself out loud. His blood beats into his ears, his heart was ramming quite painfully at his chest-- was that how it was suppose to feel?

Sawamura was squealing. "You like Oni-san!" He blurs, springing from the bed in surprise.
Kuramochi's jaw slacks. "I-I don't like him!" He exclaims, pushing away the persistent brunette that was trying to touch him. "I admire him" the shortstop corrects.

But Sawamura's smirk doesn't oscillate. "No," he pushes Kuramochi's hand away from him. "You do more than admire him, Cheetah-senpai" he relentlessly laughs.

"God you're annoying" Kuramochi whines, knowing he made a mistake of telling. "I thought I told you not to laugh!"

"Wouldn't any brother promise that to hear what their amazing love-struck sibling wants to say that makes their heart swell" Sawamura emphasizes by clutching a fist over the apex of his heart. Kuramochi's face scrunched with disgust. "Fuck you" he snorts, and pushes him away with a look of defeat.

"Such language, Kuramochi. Oni-san might not find that attract--" the shortstop cuts him off by slamming an arm around the latter's throat and slapping a hand across his lips. His hold on him tightens. "Shut your mouth"

Sawamura gasped. "R-Right" he stifles a breath. "L-Let go of me" a wheeze comes out as Kuramochi releases the brunette.

"The point is" Kuramochi starts back up when Sawamura has calmed himself. "When you got here I guess I kind of haven't been around him lately, and I am thankful because I don't want to annoy him any longer" Kuramochi nervously says.

Sawamura recovers from the choke, and sits back on the bed while Kuramochi sat at the chair siding the desk Sawamura normally worked at when he would do his spread. His legs stretching as far as they could reach as the shortstop slouches in place. "I distracted you?" Sawamura blinks, baffled.

"More or so" Kuramochi shrugs. "I just had someone else to pay attention to" he smirks when their eyes meet. Sawamura's insides flip and he is sure Kuramochi could hear his heart beating obnoxiously loud.

"Y-You're so smooth, Kuramochi-senpai" Sawamura heaves out when he found himself not breathing. He begins to massage the area his lungs laid. The shortstop didn't seem as bothered by the compliment though, nor his little brother's growing gayness for him.

"Can I spend the night in here? I don't think I can handle Masuko's apnea any longer" Kuramochi asked when he diverts his eyes to the TV. Sawamura gushes as he shakes his head. "Go get your games! We can have a brotherly sleepover!" Sawamura claps his hands happily at the idea of them bonding and opening up to each other more. Plus, Sawamura wanted to hear more about Kuramochi and his little 'crush' on the teams' second baseman.

After importuning that Kuramochi go get a move on, the shortstop finally stands to his feet to go leave. "I am coming by after I take my shower, I stink" Kuramochi scowls at the foulness.

"You reek of love fo-"

"Quit it" Kuramochi demands before slamming the door shut.

Sawamura holds back on his laugh as he stares at the door Kuramochi left through. A warm feeling drenches him as he thinks back to what Kuramochi said. "I did everything to make sure I was the one by Ryou-san's side". Sawamura's mind was racing.

He never expected for Kuramochi to come out gay as much as he was swooning over Wakana the
first time he met her then trying to ask out his mom. But he wasn't going to stop him from loving the guy. If he loved Oni-san as much as he cared than there was no problem.

And he couldn't be any proud for him. "When you got here I guess I kind of haven't been around him lately..." An idea hatched in the first year's head.

When Kuramochi returns more than half an hour later, Sawamura helps the male settle in. The game system was plugged in and the top bunk was made. Kuramochi had brought over a bag of snacks they could chow down on while they cavort around and brought extra money in case they ran out.

"Wanna play games first?" Kuramochi asked as he inserts a disk.

"Sure" Sawamura scoots down beside him and grabs a controller. "Let's play that shooting game I am really bad at" he suggested.

"It's already in" Kuramochi snickers. "Oh...well guess what" Sawamura brings up as the character selection screen pops up.

Kuramochi slides the pile of gronola bars, chips, and sodas between them. "What?" He asked as he opens a gronola bar, sliding off the wrapper.

"You know how you told me that you and Oni-san barely hang out anymore" Sawamura says, and feels the shortstop go tense beside him. Slowly, the other male looks over at him, eyes widen and mind blank. "Y-Yeah...why?" He reluctantly asked with timorous.

"W-Well" Sawamura plays with the buttons on the controller as the game loads. "Haruichi and I are going with a group of friends to the movies tomorrow, you and Oni-san can come with" He proposed with ecstasy.

A brow rose. "We go to the movies...? Do you think he would want to go?" Kuramochi sounded unsure.

"I don't know. But it will give you two time to catch up" Sawamura points out.

Kuramochi looks back at the screen when the game loads. "Um...sure. I'll ask after the game" he pulls his phone out and sets it in front of him. "Good, tell me what he says" Sawamura hums as they commence the game.

Just like promised, when the first round ends Kuramochi sends the text. He is a bit hesitant at first but commits to the idea when Sawamura urges him.

To take his mind off of it, they play a few rounds. They played for two hours in total before switching to another game. They go through all of them in the next hour, quickly getting bored. They talk for the next thirty minutes while they ate, watching whatever they found of interest on the TV.

"Well? Did he text back?" Sawamura asked when they are laying next to each other on the bed. Sawamura is resting his head between the shortstop's neck, staring up at the phone Kuramochi held up to check.

After a moment of silence, a strained "no" flutters around. Sawamura glances up at the defeated shortstop. "Don't beat yourself up, he is probably sleeping or still working out if not" the brunette says to cheer the older male up.

"I'm not depressed about it. But it would be nice to go out with him" Kuramochi lays his phone down beside him as he glances down at Sawamura. The first year's breath hitches at how close they
were. "S-See? You *love* Oni-san" he cheekily grins. Kuramochi pinches the brunette's nose between his index and thumb.

"Believe what you want" Kuramochi's hoarse voice fills Sawamura's ears. His fingers leave a burning sensation on the bridge of his nose. The first year can only softly laugh. Then he stops and a frown tugs at his lips.

"What's wrong?" Kuramochi asked, brows connecting and seriousness evident.

A blush creeps to Sawamura's cheeks as he buries his face in the pillow he laid on. "I-It's Miyuki...I guess I am worried for him?" Sawamura sounded diffident. He could see Kuramochi's face foil but not for long.

"Weird. Almost sounds like you care for him" Kuramochi sighs as he traces a finger down the brunette's cheek. Sawamura purses his lips with hostility as he lightly punches the older male. "I would never. Not when he made me walk in the rain" Sawamura snaps.

The shortstop's eyes enlarged. "You walked in the rain?" Kuramochi lays up but Sawamura pushes him back down.

"Don't worry about it" Sawamura sighs as he rolls off of Kuramochi's shoulder.

And he doesn't.

"What are you worried about? That he might be bipolar?" Kuramochi asked as his eyes bore into the only golden ones. Sawamura hesitantly nods. He doesn't want it to sound like Miyuki is the only thing on his mind. But the guy can really be a mood killer. "I guess" He murmurs, tilting his head down.

"I know it may not be a big deal to you but it is to me. It's weird..." Sawamura squirms. Kuramochi flicks him in the head after a few seconds of silence. "You're so ignorant" he voices as he stares down the brunette.

"I care about him as much as you do" Sawamura jumps at his tone. "We may be on bad terms but that doesn't mean I am still looking out for him. He's my friend" his tone shakes with agony.

"And believe it or not I am just as scared as you are. But Miyuki will be okay, he is one of the strongest people I know, which I hate admitting" he ruefully chuckles. Kuramochi pressed his forehead against Sawamura's. The first year swallows back nervously, feeling beat up that he didn't know of Kuramochi's feelings. Of course he wasn't the only one worried.

"I-I'm sorry...I-I don't..." Sawamura frowns, unable to come up with anything. He only apologizes. "I didn't..." He groans in agitation. His heart was pacing and his blood was cooling. Kuramochi nudges him a little.

"It's fine. Miyuki is fine" He assures him as he lays up in the bed.

Sawamura tries to smile. "Yeah...I hope" he draws imaginary circles on the blankets. The shortstop grins back.

"Well, I am going to bed" Kuramochi then yawns as he climbs over Sawamura. He is sure he has his phone before making his way to the top bunk. "Goodnight, Kuramochi" Sawamura bids quietly.

The lights go out but the TV remains on. Sawamura listens to Kuramochi's light snores as he watches TV. The show he was watching hardly peeked his interest, but he still couldn't sleep. His
mind was fixated on Miyuki and he hated it.

He trusted Kuramochi. Miyuki was okay and even if he wasn't the guy was strong enough to overcome anything. Sawamura hoped that was the case. He was aware everyone had a weak side. But did Miyuki? He didn't seem to have one.

Someone that cold-hearted. Yeah.

But even so, that weak side of him is probably sealed off somewhere inside Miyuki that he doesn't even remember. A part of him no one will know about until it is provoked.

A stressed sigh departs his lips. Why was Miyuki so confusing? Sawamura wanted to know...

...so badly.

A loud thump shakes the dorm as Kuramochi falls to the ground. He let's out a long, loud groan that surprisingly didn't wake the others nearby if they weren't practicing on their own time.

The only thing Sawamura regrets other than staying up late by himself was wishing he kicked down some pillows on the ground to break Kuramochi's fall. It seemed to have hurt a lot.

"I can't believe Ryou-san doesn't want to go" Kuramochi whines as he pulls his phone back over his face for him to reread the message hoping he had misunderstood. But the sentence he continued reading only seemed more real and real each time.

Sawamura timidly moves around the immobilized male, avoiding any future attacks that might have him on his knees. "Maybe he is busy with other things?" The brunette figures as a finger taps his chin.

Seeing Kuramochi all sadden and dejected was a bit amusing. But it was heartening to know he was actually anticipating a day out with his 'idol'.

"I suppose" Kuramochi sighs again as he lays up, wincing at the aftermath of the impact. "He is always pretty busy" he accepts the hands offered to him and helps Sawamura pull him up. Even though that could be a possibility Kuramochi still felt demoralized.

He stretches in place, cracking his aching back. "See? Don't get your undies in a bundle" Sawamura cracks to lighten the mood. If anything he was ready to be plowed by an undercover ballistic wrestler.

"Hm, maybe I should fund a cult against you" Kuramochi snaps as he playfully kicks the guy at his butt as they begin to venture to the Seidou spirit cafeteria. Once Sawamura had taken his shower he had felt hungry and urged Kuramochi to go with him...until he heard about the text he got back early that morning.

"I-I'm good" Sawamura roughly laughs, stepping ahead so he isn't attacked no longer. Kuramochi doesn't bother to catch up, still down. His lips curled down and his eyes shook with sorrow. Sawamura could tell he was really looking forward to hanging out with him.

That made him wonder how long has it been since the two actually went out. "Do I have to come? Won't it be embarrassing to see Ryou-san there knowing I was turned down" Kuramochi questions with dejection.
"Kuramochi-senpai, if anything it'll be embarrassing for you not me. Second, it's not like you asked Oni-san on a date so it shouldn't be that embarrassing" Sawamura points out while holding two fingers up.

"Third, you two are good friends so it's not like him not having time with you will tear you guys apart. And lastly, don't see it like you two are in some sort of relationship" Sawamura says when they reach the door. The early Saturday commotion could already be heard from outside the door.

Kuramochi tries to not take his little brother's words the wrong way. It felt good to know he had someone to break down things for him. It was rare he saw a point but that's when Sawamura jumps in.

"Thanks, Sawamura" Kuramochi weakly smiles as the brunette in front of him pries the door open. "Always here to help" they enter the cafeteria. Sawamura sprints to the line before it gets any longer. Meanwhile, Kuramochi was trying to avoid looking up and around while simultaneously trying not to look sad. He falls in line behind Sawamura and grabs his tray of breakfast from the girls.

"Hey, Kuramochi we can eat in the room if you want" Sawamura suggested when he turns around. The shortstop's lips thinned. "It doesn't matter we can eat here i--" Kuramochi falls silent when his eyes automatically flew up to the sound of the doors opening. They dilate at the sight of Ryousuke entering with Kajima tailing behind. They seemed to be talking.

"O-On second thought, let's eat in your room" Kuramochi drags Sawamura around half the cafeteria so they aren't in the pinklet's way. They get to the door and Kuramochi merely pushes themselves out. It was the fastest Sawamura seen his legs move in a while.

Sawamura steps forward so he is beside the older male. "Is everything okay? You seem pale Kuramochi" he asked worriedly, concern etched onto his face. The notorious player only walks off. "I'm fine...don't worry about it"

The first year frowns. He wasn't happy with the answer choice. Clearly something was wrong and he didn't want Sawamura getting in the middle of it.

But Sawamura remains in his place. The way back is filled with silence. Kuramochi could be heard trying to contain his seething but it's futile. His footsteps are loud and his jaw is tight. Sawamura wanted to calm him. He had to. This was the angriest he had seen the guy.

Then it hit him. "W-Wait, Kuramochi. Are you mad because Oni-san entered with another guy?" Sawamura didn't mean to shout it aloud.

Kuramochi stopped. "N-No, and stop shouting!" He orders as they enter the dorm. "T-Then why are you mad? If it wasn't that guy--" Kuramochi flinches at the mention despite his name not being used.

"Okay, I'll let you handle this out" Sawamura surfs in and sits on the rugged floor. He leans over and turns on the gaming system to distract himself as he eat.

"Yeah, I need time" Kuramochi says from behind him. They both begin to eat breakfast while Sawamura concurrently plays a shooting game. He wasn't good at it but he plays it if it meant not having to face the raging baseball fanatic.

"I never took you as the jealous type, Kuramochi. It's cute on you" Sawamura coos when he is done eating the last portion of his meal. He almost chokes when he heard Kuramochi ramble. "Sawamura" he mutters. "Shut up" a kick shuffles in the first years back.

"Ah, sorry" the brunette winces while laughing. "What time you leaving for the movies?"
Kuramochi asked as he checks his phone.

"Why? You coming?" Sawamura asked with a tranquil grin, excited to be going out with him again except this time to a place where he could actually have fun. Not that going to a baseball stadium wasn't.

Kuramochi clicked his tongue. "Better than staying here till practice" he sets his empty plate beside his leg and relaxes in place. At least he seemed to be doing well.

Sawamura's eyes go big. "Really? You're coming for real?" Content purls his face. Kuramochi shakes his head as he turns his phone off.

"Yeah"

"It's good to have you join us, Eijun-kun!" Haruichi fervently greets the male when he approaches the theatre a few minutes after the scheduled time. The others: Toujou, Kanemaru, and Haruno, had gathered by the ticket booth to pay. A peculiar feeling invades Sawamura's chest as he looks at his nicely dressed friends. They all looked casually nice.

Compared to them, Sawamura felt like a total outcast with his stained white shirt and baggy black and white striped joggers. Even Kuramochi dressed up and he had no one special to impress.

"Um, who is that?" Haruichi whispers rather loudly, referring to Kuramochi that had been glimping at the options of movies they could choose from. Sawamura sniggers at the sight. "That's Kuramochi-senpai, remember?" The brunette whispers back, eyeing the shortstop the same time Haruichi did. A soft hum emanates.

"I suppose, he looks different when not on the field" Haruichi clicks his tongue as he straightens himself up and glances at the three walking up to them with their tickets in hand. Sawamura can only nod.

"Yeah, well, I am going to go get my ticket okay--" Sawamura takes a step forward, but Haruichi skips in front of him and held his hand out so his palm touched his chest. The pinklet's eyes flared up with glee. "I already bought yours" he held up the two tickets he had been clutching in his hand the whole time. "See?" Haruichi's eyes brighten through the slits of his hair and his soft lips thinned upward.

Sawamura blinked back a stare and meekly nods as he returns the smile. "T-Thanks, Haruuchi!" He accepts his ticket, and looks over to see the movie they would be watching in a few minutes. 'The Crack Of Dawn'. It had an uncanny feeling with the name alone sounding out in his head.

"S-Sorry if you don't like horror, Aniki kind of recommended it and there was no way I was going by myself" Haruichi admits with embarrassment but also with sincere. Sawamura hadn't realized the face he was making was concerning the pinklet. He wasn't a fan of horror mostly because he easily got scared, but that didn't make it his least genre. In fact, if anything, he hated sappy romance movies.

Animatedly, Sawamura shakes his hand, indicating he was fine. His brows connected and his features tightened. An uncertain feeling barging into his stomach. "I-Is it really scary?" By then the others had reached them-- all tending to hear the question sputtered in reassuring answers.

Despite their answers holding a lot of trust, the same couldn't be said about their faces. Haruno was
all skittish and shaky, Toujou was pale to the bone, Kanemaru seemed dead already and Furuya...god who could tell?

Their looks were more concerning than anything. "If you say so" Sawamura sighs as they enter the theatre. They were making their way to the food station before going to the seating.

They scoot in line, all scrutinizing the menu screen for any food that caught their attention. "I think I am settling for popcorn" Toujou quietly says to not disturb those in front of them. Kanemaru didn't seem to much like the idea. "It's a good thing I am ordering for us because eating popcorn to me is like chewing on a plastic bag" he gags, but shoots the orange haired male a teasing grin.

"B-But the other things cost a lot an-" Kanemaru kicks him in the back of his leg, annoyance sprawled on his face. "Shut it" he mutters and Toujou remains muted, though he couldn't help but laugh. Haruno began asking what the others planned on getting.

Haruichi and Furuya said their orders with ease but Sawamura was having difficulty. He didn't know what to buy. And even if he did want to buy something, what could he order with a few coins?

When it hit him that he spent his last couple of scrapped out dollars with Mei to buy that camera he almost had a meltdown. Not being able to work for a few weeks dampened whatever pay he was suppose to recieve.

A frustrated groan leaves his lips. 'I suppose I can get through what--a two hour clip without food?'
He muffles as he glances at the buckets of popcorn and trays of fries.

An inhumane noise left his stomach that he was glad no one heard...until Kuramochi snuck up from behind him and poke his side. "Hungry?" He grinned cheekily at the jumpy first year. A rosy pink dusted Sawamura's cheeks and relief spurred throughout him, relieving a tight tension in his head.

"Y-Yeah, actually" Sawamura tries to not get excited. But the thought of finally getting to eat was too much to squander.

"What do you want? I'll pay" Kuramochi proposed, voice gentle and caring as ever.

Sawamura liked the idea. "Good cause I don't have a lot of money on me" he sheepishly chuckles as he rested against the shortstop when the line slowly moved up. At this rate they were going to miss more than the previews.

Kuramochi made a noise of disapproval. "You expected to just come to a theatre with nothing? It's like you were almost expecting for everything to be paid" he scolds, pinching the brunette's cheek. Sawamura winces and pulls himself away, averting his eyes so he was looking elsewhere.

"I wasn't thinking at the time" the flimsy excuse was more pretense than it sounded. But Kuramochi lets this slide. "You owe me" he smirks as he motions for Sawamura to move up when they are called next. "Yeah yeah, what more can I do? Be your waterboy every time you die out from sprints?" Sawamura scoffs unintentionally, and though his remark was exceptional he didn't want a far more punishment.

But the 'suggestion' didn't seem to bother the other male. In fact, he seemed to be thinking about it. "Maybe not a waterboy but a servant in general" Kuramochi winks at the latter when they wait for a cashier to take their order.

Sawamura's face altered dramatically. "After what Miyuki told Wakana and I about you--no thanks" he stuck his tongue. He almost stammered at mentioning the other brunette and was glad he let the name slip out easily. Otherwise, Kuramochi would have gotten a hint.
"And you rather believe that narc than your own brother? I feel insulted" Kuramochi huffed. "I'm the one paying for the food just to let you know" he prompts while pulling out his money from his pocket.

Sawamura's eyes narrowed. "Don't do whatever you're thinking, or else I won't go out with you again" he threatens while jabbing the latter in the side. Kuramochi feigns hurt by clutching at his side and wailing a small cry.

The look Sawamura gives him is priceless enough as he straightens himself. "This is why you are here alone" Sawamura retorts as he scoots down the counter to browse his options.

Kuramochi couldn't help but smile at the inquiring male. He was such a belle. He can only smirk to himself as he glances back up the menu. He is cut out of his thoughts when his phone rings.

Kuramochi pulls out his phone and looks at a message he was surprised to see was from Kominato. 'Bring me a batch of onion rings' it wasn't even a question. The demand was clear as the sky.

Kuramochi doesn't respond. He tucks his phone back into his pocket and greets the cashier warmly when she arrives at the station. Keeping him waiting wouldn't be as bad as how he made him wait.

"Why are you smiling like that?" Sawamura asked when the lady gives them their food and kindly dismisses them. They were a reasonable distance from the others who had been talking about what they hope of the movie.

Sawamura brushes his arm against Kuramochi when a response doesn't come out. But when they are looking at each other Kuramochi's stomach churns. "Don't worry about it" he holds the door open for Sawamura to enter and follows behind him.

"Seventy-one...Seventy-two...Seventy-three" a lone voice fills the weightlifting room. Heavy breathes and the squeaking of metal hitting onto each other echos the room. The air is thick with humid that it felt like the cool air circulating throughout the room was nonexistent.

"Seventy-nine...Eighty"

Sweat drips down the oppressed body. Muscles slicked with the salty liquid but enervated from the excessive workouts. But what more could any other remedy do than to work the pain and frustration away? It was all he could do...it was the only way Miyuki could get him out of his head.

Air suffocates itself into his throat so much that he was almost sure he wasn't breathing. But he endures the peripheral aching of his abs and the screaming of his muscles that plead for a break. His lungs were wheezing for a chance, trying to recoil with every cut breath of intake he managed. Miyuki shuts out everything; Everyone.

In this state of mind there was no getting him out of the deep abyss he got himself into. And just when he thought he had escaped.

"Eighty-six...Eighty-seven" he spits out hoarsely. In throat is dry and his vision wasn't focusing. He was almost about to black out. He had already been training for two hours straight nonstop-- his body couldn't handle the extra work. But Miyuki ignores the pain. "Because that's all I am ever fucking good at" he screams to himself as he lifts the two hundred pound weight over his head. Fuck. Everything was hurting. He could feel it. His body stiffened and fidgeting.
"F-Fuck you" images of Sawamura came sprinting to his mind. He hated it. He hated him. He just wanted him out of his head. "B-Because of you...It's all because of you" he grits his teeth as the weights come crashing down at a high speed. He stops them before they could touch the ground and regrips the sweaty handles.

Miyuki hated that smile. He hated how kind he acted around him; he mostly hates how Sawamura is continuing on with the ruse. Miyuki wasn't that densed; playing it was simple. But he was having difficulty maintaining the role.

Miyuki just wanted this all to blow over, that way he can get back to his life how it was before he even heard of the name 'Sawamura Eijun'. The thought of his name; that face and that fucking smile. It all made him sick to his stomach. Now, he wanted nothing to do with him.

"Ninthy-four...N-Ninthy-five...Ninthy-six" a heavy exhale leaves his lips. His body was starting to feel heavy as if it was filling with steel. But he still kept going. Miyuki hadn't plan on stopping this early or at all matter of fact.

With everyone gone and about with their own things to do before the afternoon practice Miyuki had been contributing his spare time to his own workout. It was a rare occasion: eveyone gone from campus. All the guys had something to do or planned to do whatever it was that didn't involve staying at the school. Except for Miyuki. He took advantage of it.

"Ninthy-eight...nngh, Ninthy-nine" His muscles shook with impatience to drop the weight. But Miyuki forces the weight above his body; his face burning crimson red and sweat derailing down his temples. "A hundred" all the energy he had left went into the last thrust. Incapacitated, he hunches over and cautiously drops the weight in front of him. He lays up and stretches, his loose joints easing and the tension in his body decreasing.

His vision than focused, and he looks around to see that he was still alone. The room was still silent, only this time Miyuki could hear the air vents. The catcher grabs at a towel he had borrowed and drapes it across his neck as he sits on a nearby bench. Then, Miyuki grabs a water bottle and gulps down half the contents before another shaky breath let him.

This time he felt like he was done. That he had pushed himself over his limits. But, then again, it was an overwhelming feeling. To finally get rid of those horrid nightmares and flashbacks it was nothing more than a relief. A flawless sensation.

Those reoccurring events—he couldn't handle. He needed a way out. Anything to focus on that didn't have to deal with him being mentally challenged than he thought himself to be.

Miyuki's breath is husky as he breathes, and his body sat unmoved to regain his strength and mobility. His legs were trembling but not of fear. And no matter how hard he tried to stop it his legs just wouldn't. He was anxious; frustrated.

The empty bottle was set down when there was no use of it. Miyuki bends over to rest his head on his clammy palms. He closed his eyes for a brief moment to let the excruciating pain he was feeling escape. He was tired. Very tired.

It felt like he hadn't sleep in days. But he did, and his body felt like he was in mush. He felt like he was melting from the inside out, and that he was burning in a volcano. Heat scorched his legs and crawled all the way up his neck. It burned like hell. But in some sense it was refreshing to know it was over.

Miyuki's could barely hear what was around him. All he could hear was his fast pacing heart on top
of his irrational, unstable breathing. His surroundings suddenly felt unreal -like this was all a dream-like he was nothing but a walking corpse.

Not that he was far from it's appearance. Despite him actually sleeping, bags hung under Miyuki's eyes and his skin was breaching the door of another color. His hair was messy and stuck to his forehead, and he seemed a bit skinnier than usual from not eating as much as he use to.

Yeah, Miyuki was eating less. He would admit to himself. He didn't know why he couldn't eat. It wasn't like he was trying to starve himself on purposw either. He just felt guilty. Guilty for everything.

Sucked in by alleviating the pain inflicting his body, Miyuki doesn't hear the pair of footsteps that enter the building. The footsteps come closer and closer and by the time they came in earshot Miyuki's breathing had turned silent.

Nothing was said in the first few seconds. Miyuki had still been --quietly-- catching his breath while the other figure only stood and watch. A contemptuous laugh echoed the weightlifting room which makes Miyuki cease any movements.

"Is this how you have been coping these last few years?" The question came out almost as if the idea was pathetic. Another laugh follows, more sordidly than the last. The bitterness in the guy's tone makes Miyuki violently shake. If he had known--if he had saw this coming than maybe he wouldn't have attended the school. "It's funny, actually, that you think you could escape from doing something so heinous" Miyuki grips his fist at the gravelly voice. He hated it. He fucking hated it. Hated him. A person he loathe more than Sawamura.

It was a lot he mustered to not want to lash out. As if knowing the guy was still looking at him, Miyuki unhurriedly looks up, and even though his face was twisted with so much abhorrence for the guy, his body was debilitated and couldn't be brought of any use to fight in such state. Their eyes meet evanescently, and with that short amount of time, both held a face expressing different emotions.

Rage buries deep inside of Miyuki's chest. He waited so long for this moment only so he could get revenge. But so much has changed. About them and about the situation they got into. Miyuki was seething. He was beyond livid.

"H-Heinous?" Miyuki chokes on the word when he says it and glanced down at his hands fisted into his lap. His eyes harden with antipathy and his teeth grinds. "There is nothing heinous about what I did" he spat with malvolence, eyes jerking up.

The guy smirks. "Oh? Even though you were the one that put him in the hospital?" A derisory hum emphasizes just who they were talking about.

Miyuki bites his lips. "Fuck you. This is all of your damn fault" the catcher stands to his feet with a loud noise reverberating the ground. He almost stumbles, still jaded from the hardcore training. Miyuki holds his ground, however, and tries to cloak any vulnerabilities leaking by.

He was ready to go. There was nothing more he had to say other than for the guy to screw himself. After all it's not like he did anything physically to make anyone suffer back then. It was him that did everything. And Miyuki hated himself for being such a follower; for listening to the guy.

He packs his things into his duffel bag and throws the strap over his shoulder. His eyes flicker over to those beady emerald ones and he swears there will be a day where he cuts them out of their sockets. "Out of my way, Daichi" Miyuki ordered with an impassive look, his voice cold and full of
nothing but spite. The other brunette stood over him by a few inches which made Miyuki have to look up at him. They stared at each other for what seemed like forever until Daichi took a step over while closing his eyes.

Miyuki steals a quick look at the robust guy crossing his arms with a snarky look curtaining his looks. He takes a look at the ripped jeans and faded shirt. Daichi didn't seem to be looking for a fight. Good. He walks by, bumping into Daichi to head anywhere but near him. If he stood by him any longer he was sure he would be going to jail.

"I didn't even know you attended Seidou, well, at least till I heard about your baseball scholarship" Daichi starts, a sinister glint endowing in him. "I didn't think it was you at first. A guy as charming looking as you didn't seem to have any troubles" he meniacly laughs. "At first glance that is"

A peculiar feeling lodged into Miyuki's chest. He remembered how much he hated Daichi's guts but this guy was like a real monster now. Everything about him changed. Ever since he met Sawamura. 'That fucking idiot' Miyuki reprimands to himself. What a pain in the ass.

"I don't know why you think you can start over" Daichi's voice rung throughout Miyuki's ears when he is nearing the exit. Miyuki haults with his hand almost on the handle of the door. His hand drops at his side and more agonizing memories cross his mind. "But that's one thing that never changes about you, Miyuki. You always know how to run away" a grim smirk danced itself on Daichi's lips.

Miyuki's body trembled with remorse when he thinks back to the horrifying sight of Sawamura. Those watery eyes, that scared look. Miyuki's blood began to boil.

"Hm, if I have to assume" Daichi pauses, licking his lips as he looks back at the still brunette. "I think I still have my wraps on you" his voice sounded closer in spite of not moving a feet from where he stood. Miyuki's breath hitched and his head throbbed painfully at the imputation.

The air around them grew thick, much to the point where even moving seemed difficult. Neither of them said a thing. How was Miyuki suppose to react by someone he was use to doing things for?

There has been times in the past where Miyuki has hung out with Daichi and befriended him. But that was then. Now, Miyuki wanted him to rot dead.

Everything was going to hell way too quickly. Miyuki didn't like it. He can only force a laugh out of his blocked throat, fighting to say something to rebuttle with that shows he had at least changed over the years. Otherwise this was a losing battle.

A derisive chortle. "Me under your wraps? Do you think I am still that gullible little boy you bossed around or what?" Miyuki's jaw clenched tightly as he took a shaky breath.

Miyuki shakes his head and places his hand on the on the knob. "As if" he twist the knob.

However, when a footstep goes off the knots in Miyuki's stomach tighten. "Doesn't matter what you are" Daichi's deep voice bombards the entire room. The footsteps sounded loud in Miyuki's ears. His blood was pumping ferociously and adrenaline cooled in his veins. The fatigue that brimmed his body attentuates. "As long as you don't get between me and my Ei then we won't have any problems" Daichi sniggers impishly as he pats a hand on the catcher's shoulder, getting to him by using the nickname Miyuki designed for him.

"And who knows?" His voice deepens when they made eye contact. "Maybe you'll be forgiven for what you did" Daichi's eyes seemed to glow up close. Miyuki's own amber eyes glowering into his.

"You mean we" Miyuki corrected him when he moves from under Daichi's touch when the older
male tries to rest of him, claiming he wasn't an armrest. The taller brunette doesn't hide back his laugh. "If that's how you want to put it...and unless you don't want to suffer anymore just forget you exist to Eijun, okay?" He bumps into Miyuki as he walks by and swings the door open for the latter.

"It would really lessen our problems" he closes the door behind him, leaving Miyuki alone in the weightlifting room. The air suddenly cools around him, not a noise being made. The vents had shut, making the room even quieter. All Miyuki could hear was Daichi's voice back then....constantly telling him what to do. The brunette clenched his fist and a grunt slips out.

"Go ahead and have him...he's not worth a damn thing to me" Miyuki snapped as he turns back, deciding to do another workout.
A New Kind Of Suffer

Chapter Summary

Sawamura meets Daichi in the halls, and accidental bump ins are never really good on his side of the table // Miyuki suspects that there is something wrong with Kuramochi more than him.

Chapter Notes

First off, I apologize for any mistakes. And second I am NOT good at this stuff and is not really a fan of it so sorry if I suck....I really am but I am not trying to make it too explicit. It's just weird. I can not for the love of god write this nonchalantly. And third, sorry for any confusion. Trust me it gets easier the further the story progresses.

Anyway, enjoy the story!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Hey, Nori-senpai, did you know I could pitch?" Sawamura blurted out at the sidearm pitcher that had been warming his arm up that Sunday morning. The second year eyed him suspiciously when hearing this, afraid to find some weird answer as a follow up.

"What do you mean?" He asked as he stretches his right arm over his chest.

Sawamura lays up in his seat from taking a quick photo and sits the camera down on his lap. "I meant what I said" the brunette restates as if there was no better way to put it. Though the little details were precise, Sawamura didn't seem like he was going to explain himself.

"Um, okay?" Kawakami shrugged awkwardly. "Could you maybe expl--"

"I thought you never ask!" Sawamura squeals with delight.

The second year pitcher's face drops. "Am I your substitute whenever Kuramochi isn't around?" He quips as he throws a sloppy pitch to the net that hung a few twenty feet away. He cringes at the pitch and rotates his arm to put it at ease.

"I don't think of it like that, I put it like you're the second most guy I like around here" Sawamura says as he watches Kawakami stalk to the lone ball.

"Ah, so that's what it is..." He rolls his eyes with little care even though what he said was similar to how Sawamura put it.

"Yeah" Sawamura sighs melodramatically as he flops back down in his seat. When Kuramochi told him he would be gone for a while that day the brunette grew a bit skeptical. But when it was known that he was going for an appointment he arranged to get his arm checked out only then had it hit him.

Sawamura had forgot for the most part that Kuramochi had in fact been injured that day he got lost in
the woods. The shortstop has played his wounds off so smoothly that it was like his arm was never sprained in the first place.

Whatever happened to irritate his arm this badly must have been a wake up call for him to organize an appointment. Sawamura could only hope it wasn't that bad for him to not play baseball for a while.

If that were the case Sawamura wouldn't know how to deal with himself. To know he was the reason why Kuramochi would have to stop playing made his heart ache. He loved every player on the team—it would be weird to have one of them replaced for some inconvenience that happened to be his cause.

He knows Kuramochi would tell him to not beat himself up about it, but that seemed highly impossible. The shortstop was the closest thing to a brother he had, if anything were to happen to him he didn't know how he would cope.

"So, how do you know how to pitch again?" Kawakami snaps Sawamura out of his trance. The brunette plays with his index finger as he straightens himself.

A huge smile displays itself on his face, and he is now suddenly all bouncy and bubbly. "A friend of mine is teaching me" he tells while throwing his arms over himself.

His heart began to swell at the mere image of Sanada. "Er, well, my best friend" he blushes when he thinks back to the time Sanada knew them to be of that title. Best friends.

It was hard to believe at times. A cool looking pitcher with handsome features and was very athletic was friends with Sawamura—the phantasmagorical vibe was beginning to disentangle.

"So are you saying you're going to play for us soon?" Kawakami asked as he commits to another pitch, this time more perfect than the last.

A light gust of wind shrivels by, collecting up dust on its way. The wind sweeps through Sawamura's messy locks, and leaves them tangled and more disheveled.

Sawamura blows out a huff of breath as he fumbles with the camera draping around his neck. "Most likely not" he says as he then holds the camera up to his eyes to capture another picture.

The sidearm pitcher seemed tensed when he picks up the ball and shifts the object between his fingers as if it was some calming remedy. "Then what's the point of you pitching if you don't plan on doing anything with it?" Kawakami's tone was a bit harsh.

The offense in his tone was evident. As a pitcher being told that there will be more pitchers added to the team or used between games was a whole middle finger to the regulars that would take into notice that they weren't good enough. They had to make due with the only two pitchers on the team. And telling a pitcher that face on was even more of an offense.

Kawakami's face scrunched with disgust. "I got enough on my plate as a challenge already" he says, diverting his gaze at Sawamura who had been staring off into the distance. "I don't need further provocation" he pitches again, but the ball curls up into the net, too high to be called a strike.

He curses and Sawamura hides his face behind the camera. It was no secret that Kawakami was the most let down on the first string. Whenever things didn't go his way or he didn't do as good as he would expect to help the team he was always found beating himself up.

Only Sawamura could see in his eyes that he has been running; not away from the challenge but after the people whom he would call superior.
Right. It was all over his face. Kawakami has been running for years, and it seems like he was finally reaching his breaking point of losing his cool.

An unsettling noise went off inside Sawamura's stomach. He had already eaten so he knew he wasn't hungry-- but maybe could he be nervous about the brittle pitcher finally crumbling?

*I don't get sports* Sawamura inhales sharply as he refocuses the camera. This was why Sawamura never plays. He doesn't understand what makes players get pent up and frustrated. He thought they only played to have fun.

But ever since he got assigned the baseball spread it seemed like everyone on the team has endured some sort of hardship that made them so fierce and competitive. As if the game was their life.

*You know some of us go home wondering already what we need to do to catch up to our enemies...*; *I did everything to make sure I was the one by Ryou-san's side*, Sawamura sucks in a shaky breath as he takes a picture of Kawakami. He lowers the camera from his face and finds his eyes involuntarily moving toward the matted ground.

Everyone is fighting. Not physically but competitively. But for what? To show that they can overcome the superior teams? To show that even the weak can rise?

*Why can't they just have fun* Sawamura sighs to himself again. He slowly stands to his feet and watches as Kawakami pitches again. He didn't want to disturb him, so Sawamura slowly backs away out of the bullpen.

He nervously chews at his lips as he continues to hear the aggravated muffling of Kawakami's pitching slowly worsening. Sawamura wanted to help. But did it really matter? He was there to take pictures for the season, not to mentor them and become a cheerleader.

*They'll just have to get better next ti-* Sawamura turns around and stops himself midway when he almost bumps into one of the bypassing players. Or so, they seemed to have planned heading in this direction.

"S-Sorry" Sawamura reluctantly looks up to see he was met with boiling amber eyes. His heart leaps against his chest painfully when the stare holds, and his body falls rigid with the seeming intention to not want to move.

Hopefully this is it. Maybe this time Miyuki could...apologize?

All Sawamura knew was that he wasn't going to do it. He wasn't apologizing for being the one to suffer-- and to boost his ego? Miyuki could jump in a trench and burn if he thought he was doing it first.

But in those deadly few seconds, the looks on their faces remained. Miyuki's features doesn't soften into something disheartening, and Sawamura seemed persistent to get him to say it first.

Nothing still happened. It was as if the longer they stood in the way of each other the stronger their hatred grew.

And since Sawamura didn't seem to be saying anything anytime soon, Miyuki went first. "Out of my way" he chastise bitterly. He pushes Sawamura but the brunette remained still until Miyuki brushed by while nudging into him.

Sawamura's mind went blank for a moment. As he slowly walks over and watch Miyuki trudge into the bullpen the first year can only be more confused.
'Out of my way...? Is he really avoiding to apologize?' Sawamura digs a nail into his wrist in agony. His heart was beating rapidly against his chest that he was sure anyone in a ten mile radius could hear. He felt suffocated. The clothes he was wearing suddenly felt heavier and the sweltering sun wasn't making it any better.

Sawamura tries to breathe properly, but his lungs were crying out in pain and his chest was barely fit to recoil. Everything seemed to hurt.

Hesitantly, Sawamura looks back and watches as the now cheerful catcher bends down a comfortable distance away from Kawakami, shouting out encouraging words to help him pitch better.

'Why is he like this?' Sawamura frowns when he studies Miyuki's expression when the catcher throws the ball. He turns back unsteadily to walk anywhere but around Miyuki. He didn't feel like staying in today so he kept himself around the field to watch the other guys play.

Only this time he didn't take pictures. Sawamura continued to drown himself in the drowsiness of the whether-- laping into inertia for the sake of just wanting to let the moment sink in.

Listening to the clinking of the bats and the shouts from the field hadn't become tedious until an insipid play went about with little enthusiasm. But that rarely happened because every play was an eventful play.

Seeing the players work together under the force of competition and eagerness to win really brought out each player's inner demon. In field mostly.

Sawamura lays back in his spot, not knowing what to do to make time pass. He wasn't bored from watching, he just wished he could do something other than nothing.

It was bad enough he thought he wasn't helping the team enough. Sitting around not doing his job would give off a wrong impression. And the last thing Sawamura needed was for the players to think he was indolent.

"Why do you look like a sad little child who can't go out to play because it's raining? Hmm..." Ryousuke's voice invades the first year's ears. His brown eyes flutter from the sudden mention and straightens up to meet with those cunning narrow eyes that belonged to the third year.

A blush creeps up to the brunette's tan cheeks as he stammers for an answer. "I-I'm just bored I guess" Sawamura aimlessly shrugs with little intention to want to do anything about it.

"Bored?" The second baseman repeats after a moment of silence waves by. He nods right after the brunette does. "Then why don't you play with us?" Kominato suggested with an eerie grin. His cheeks shining from the sweat and eyes squinted with underlying fidelity.

"P-Play?" Sawamura stutters with uncertainty. "With you?" He points at the seidou player.

The pinklet nods. "Wouldn't want you to be bored, hm?" He motions for the brunette to come over. Sawamura chews at the inside of his cheek as he climbs down the bleachers. When he is safe on ground the second baseman leads him to the dugout where disgarded equipment laid idly around.

"Pick up a glove you find suitable for you" Sawamura hears Kominato say from behind him. Slowly, Sawamura nods and begins to look around. There wasn't a lot for him to go on, but Sawamura settles with a brown glove that was much broken into.

"That one?" Kominato asked with surprise. Sawamura examines the glove as he nods a reply.
"Yeah, this one" he delicately shoves his hands inside and thrusted his fingers in it's coordinated position.

"Mkay, go stretch for a while. I'll talk with the others" Kominato enlightens with an amused chortle. He leaves the dugout with that, and Sawamura begins to do small stretches.

He wondered if he was going to get an outfit as well but he knew what he wore for now was an already ideal get up. Joggers and a long sleeve was what he normally went for--and all other guys practicing on an off day while their uniforms were cleaning.

When he is finished stretching ten minutes later Sawamura exits the dugout to see the first stringers huddled together at the pitcher's mound. They seemed to be conspiring over something that Sawamura didn't want to get involved in.

A hand finds it's way on Sawamura's head which breaks him out of his daze. The brunette doesn't move and only shifts his eyes up so he is looking at a pool of calm brown eyes. "Chris-senpai?"

Sawamura grins when he makes of the familiar features belonging to the retired catcher.

"Sup, Sawamura, was it?" The senior confirms as he ruffles the latter's hair. The first year goofily grins once the hand is removed from his head.

Chris peeks over and steals a look at the glove stuffed on the brunette's hand. "What's this about?"

"O-Oh, Oni-san wants me to play with them so I am not bored" Sawamura enlightens with a big smile. "I am kind of nervous because I never played before..." Chris laughs to himself at how innocent looking Sawamura was when he was clueless and skittish.

"You're like a belle you know?" The senior mentions with a small smile himself as he props himself against the steel gate and folds his arms over his chest. Sawamura blinks, confusion skyrocketing.

"Belle?" He says while turning to the catcher in turmoil.

"You know? A beauty belle" Chris reiterates while stealing a look at the now disassembling group of players. Before Sawamura could ask any further questions Chris pushes himself off from the gate to catch up with the others.

"Hey, guys" he greets the others warmly with tender eyes, his voice brimming in tranquil.

Confused still, Sawamura timidly stalks towards the group, staying behind Chris as he listens to the others inform him about what they were planning to do. "Sounds like a good idea, mind if I have our little belle on my team?" Chris asked as he exchanged looks with the others. When he glances down at Sawamura and catches those eyes staring back down at him he winks.

"Belle?" Jun snarls, demented. His angry big eyes flicker between Chris and Sawamura. "Yep" the senior says nonchalantly as he wraps a leisure arm around the brunette's neck and pulls him closer.

Sawamura's breath ran short when he collides against Chris' chest. He tries to ignore the heat he could feel emanating from the latter's body, and the increasing of his inflamed cheeks. But that seemed impossible. The first year was nervously stammering, looking anywhere but at the baffled first stringers; he distracted himself by finding interest at a distant ant carrying a small crumb.

Then a honey like voice ilicts. "Beauty wise?" It was Kominato who had asked, but not for verification. No, he knew what Sawamura having that title meant all too well.

Chris lips curve up. "Mm" he answers almost quietly.
"Well, I don't think You-chan would like it if you were rubbing against his young brother" Kominato remarks as he turns on his heel.

Sawamura's face suddenly went hot. "They're brothers?" The brunette could feel Chris gaze land on him when he says this.

Even though they weren't biologically related, admitting that they were just pretend family even seemed difficult. The first year stuffs his beaming cheeks behind his whiten palms. He didn't understand why the pinklet likes to put people on the spot.

"You could say" Jun grumbles as he leans against Tetsu like he was some sort of pillar. "The way he clings to your belle is as if they really are related" the center fielder clicks his tongue.

Suddenly, Chris body loosened. Sawamura hadn't realized the senior was tensed. He questioned what was the need to be. It wasn't like Kuramochi was his bodyguard or anything.

"But we're not" Sawamura insist with a witty grin as he plays with the hem strings of the glove, finding them to fit his amusement. "Well? Are we going to play or not? Since we are down a couple of players I will teach you shortstop" Kominato advocates as he faces the inexperienced male.

"Okay" Sawamura's smile still present as he follows the pinklet to the infield. The third year broke down the simple rules of the game and how the role of shortstop is driven. From what Sawamura could hear it shouldn't be hard at all.

But playing was a different thing. He knew. When the regulars were distributed into two teams Sawamura heads to his position in infield. Tanba would be their pitcher.

"Go, Tanba-senpai!" Sawamura cheered from his spot, jumping with enthusiasm.

"Someone's optimistic" Masuko notes as he bends down a few feet away from third base.

Sawamura blushes at the suppose compliment. "This is the first game I am actually playing in" he admits timorously.

"Then try to give it your all, the first batter is up" Kominato points in the direction of their center fielder coming up to bat.

That's when Sawamura grew paralyzed. "J-Jun-senpai is batting first?" He stammers, his body growing hot and clammy.

Kominato chortles impishly. "Scared?" The second baseman's neutral grin persist to his puffy cheeks. The pinklet was sitting on his knees in position of the impending attack of a wild pop fly from the loudmouth player.

"S-Sort of" Sawamura squats down in the same manner to prepare for the live play.

"Don't worry" he listens to the assurance in Kominato's tone as Jun's disposition. "We have a medic on standby" the words don't fully register until a pitch from Tanba is hit clean off the bat and resounds through the field.

Sawamura stutter steps when he notices everyone moving somewhere, only thing was he didn't know where the ball was himself. With Jun already running, a cacophony of "The ball is there!" and whatnot filters in and out the brunette's ears.

Then he saw it. The ball had been popped up to center. It was caught.
"Jun, you're out" Many of the players called out. The senior looked bewildered but complies and trudges back into the dugout.

"Oh," a hand crawls behind Sawamura's neck and massages the desicated area. "The ball went so high. I thought it was a home run for a second" He chuckles anxiously as he backs up into position.

"That's the difference between Isashiki and Yuuki's batting" Kominato heeds rather loudly for the already high-strung latter to hear.

"Oni-san, don't provoke a raging volcano" Sawamura hushes the older brother so they wouldn't get caught.

The game continues on attentively. Many of the other players came to watch when they heard the team's photographer had 'joined' the spotlight. There were a lot of plays Sawamura couldn't get to in time because his eyes wouldn't adjust to the quick pace of the ball speeding in his direction, but he did have someone always there to back him up.

It was interesting enough that the news reached Takashima and coach Kataoka. It was the seventh inning when the gates were completely filled.

Masuko was up to bat, Kominato was on first, and Sawamura was in the hole. "Hit a big one, Masuko-senpai!" Sawamura shouts in sanguinity. The score was 8-6 and their team was losing. To have someone as strong witted as Masuko in this time was propitious.

"Ugah!" Masuko roars as he heads up to bat.

Sawamura begins to watch the heavy lifted batter until something heavy fell on his head. His vision smeared and the dust from the field collects onto his face.

"Hm?" He looks up confused and spots Chris hovering above him with a serene grin. "You weren't going to go out there without a helmet were you?" He catechize with a tint of surprise as he pulls back on the next batter.

"I-I forgot, sorry" Sawamura gushes as he fixes the helmet.

"Right" Chris softly chuckles as he pats an affirming hand on the latter.

Sawamura's plump lips puckered. "You sound like you don't believe me. I'm not that clumsy" He exclaims defensively with bulging brown eyes and a red face.

When the ear-splitting sound of the ball surfacing over the field resonace, Sawamura jolts to see the ball flying over to right field. "Ah, go Masuko-senpai!" He cheers with avidity, his eyes following the trajectory of the ball.

It seemed like it was going to be a home run from where Sawamura was standing. Into right field it went, but the first year's stomach began to twist into knots when he saw Shirasu align himself up with the ball.

Pop. The ball pounds into Shirasu's mitt upon contacting, announcing the second out. The other team rallies in victory as Masuko jogs back to the dugout.

"I'll avenge you, Masuko-senpai!" Sawamura claps his hands together as he regrips on the bat he was holding.

"Set the stage for Chris"
"Get Kominato in"

The cheers went on as Sawamura jogs up to the batters box. He almost trips over his shoe when going up, and Chris can only look the other way as Sawamura glared at him. "I'm not clumsy!" He stuck his tongue out in case Chris came up with an immediate rebuttle off the top of his head.

Chris hums melodically as he averts his eyes ephemerally prior to looking back at the ebullient teen. A million dollar grin flashes his face as he watches the brunette nervously prepare.

"It's okay if you strikeout Sawamura" One of the players shout from the dugout. Whether it was suppose to promote some sort of relief that his teammates wouldn't be mad at him or not, Sawamura still wanted to do something big. He was two for four as of now and had been left on base one of his tries.

This time he wanted to be the one to advance a runner, get on base, and score. Kawakami came to pitch when he was done practicing with Miyuki. He wasn't as hard as he seemed so taking a hit from him was quite simple.

Point is, whenever Sawamura got up to bat his pitches suddenly seemed faster each time.

"Strike!" The first pitch is called when Sawamura backs away from what he thought would be a hit by pitch. His brows furrow--unhinged-- as he stares down at the catcher's mitt.

"It's faster than before" Sawamura thinks to himself as he raises the bat and bends his legs back up.

Another pitch comes and this time Sawamura swings. Strike...again.

"Dammit! I was off by a hair!" He grits his teeth as he raises the bat over his head in indignation.

"By a hair?" The crowd cites bluntly with narrow eyes and blank faces.

"Hey now" Chris rotates his arms to ease the growing tension. "You're starting to look clumsy" he smirks as he practices a quick swing. His eyes gluing back to the younger latter as he flawlessly remains still from an obvious ball.

The next pitch ended up being fouled away. Sawamura's breath catches in his throat as he stumbles forward, hauling himself back at the length it took for him to hit what was meant to be his third strike.

"Good eye" his teammates cheer as Sawamura positions himself.

When the next pitch comes Sawamura powerfully swings, and this time a loud noise thunders over the field. A spurring silence entwines with the uneasiness of the wind whistling by. Before Sawamura knew it his teammates were shouting at him the moment the ball flew over Jun's head.

"O-Oh!" Almost forgetting he was suppose to be running, Sawamura takes off running to first. But the first baseman coach had other plans when Sawamura's speed began to slow upon approached.

"Keep going? But I'm tired!" Pain twist in Sawamura's attributes as he pushes off the base and forces his arms to keep up with the pace of his legs. He regains his composure after almost tripping over his foot and speeds by second when he saw Jun just now grabbing the ball.

A sense of fear etched itself into his veins when he heard the opposing players yelling at Jun to hurry. Sawamura's body felt heavy; his chest was tightening and his legs were weakening.
The ramming of his heart pounds it's way into his ears, and consternation jags his mind and pools into his stomach. Sawamura couldn't remember a time where he ran so hard. But seeing the home plate as he turned over third-- a new bounty arose.

Get to base so you can rest.

A surge of determination rerouted. Sawamura pushed himself harder and harder; screams pulsate from one end out.

As if he knew the ball was chasing after him, Sawamura dives at home plate in a split second, using whatever energy he had left.

Another ripple of silence ventilates as Sawamura climbs to his knees, heaving tiredly as he keeps a firm hand on the home base plate. He tries to focus his vision as he stares off into the distance of clay.

Everything hurt. His body hurt. His chest ached angrily. "Maybe this was a bad idea" Sawamura cringed as a debilitated pant smooths from between his lips.

But cheers erupt and a smile is painted across the brunette's face as he helps himself up. "Good job Sawamura!" His team screams as they run over to the worn out first year with open arms.

"T-Thanks" Sawamura grins as he hugs them tightly then grabs the bat he had dropped to the floor from Chris, and jogs back to the dugout where more praise awaits him.

"That was amazing for your first time Sawamura" They congratulate as Sawamura sinks into a deep corner of the dugout to catch his breathe.

An unfamiliar feeling makes itself known in the first year's stomach as he listens to the accrue of compliments. A nail digs into his wrist as Sawamura stares off into the field.

"I-I did something...and everyone loved it" his finger twitches with some sort of pleasure. The smile on his lips widen when the moment continues to sink in.

"They...loved...it" The memory repeats itself into his head. "I loved it" He says to himself in a mellow tone after a slight pause.

"Heh" he laughs to himself, then falls silent. "Feels weird..."

"Wow, that really happened?" Kuramochi smirked with amusement as he ruffles the now infamous male with a hand. Sawamura made a look at his older brother and pouts silently at the treatment.

"Yeah" Jun ate at a chip madly, eyes boring into a manga he had been reading for the last few minutes.

"Too bad you missed it" Tetsu hums as he uses his turn in the Shogi match he contracted to. The captain turns to Sawamura and tap him, indicating his turn.

"Yeah, where were you?" Jun asked, flickering his gaze up for a moment to meet with the shortstop's before they surrendered to the next page much to his engrossment.

Kuramochi leans against Sawamura when he returns from a quick play and thumbs at the controller to play the wrestling game he had long inserted. "Why are you invested in my life?" He remarked as
he quickly dips a hand into Sawamura's personal bag of chips.

A harrumph follows. "Just thought it'd be common courtesy to let your team know" the center fielder says bitterly.

Kuramochi rolls his eyes. "I was out with a girl" he grins. And even though it's a lie it kind of shocked Sawamura. "Who did you see?" Sawamura asked with a sharp eye as he pops a chip in his mouth.

A sinister grin sprints to his lips as he nudges the latter. "Wakana" he pokes Sawamura in the nose as he scoots away from an impending hit.

"You were?!" Sawamura exclaims as he grabs ahold of Kuramochi's collar.

"Yep" he grins goofily as the brunette continues to violently shake him. "Why were you out there with her?! How did you get that to happen?" Sawamura gapes.

"Yeah, how did that happen?" Tetsu asked stoically as he taps Sawamura, patiently waiting for his turn to pass.

The brunette makes a look of remembrance and scans the board before making a play Tetsu thought to be 'smart'. Then all eyes went to Kuramochi while their captain ogled the board, anticipating any plays the first year could make on him to shelter him out.

"You guys seriously think I can't get with a girl?" Kuramochi's face scrunched up in shock as he reverts back to his game.

"No one didn't say you could" Jun bookmarks the page he is on then closes it and lays forward on the bed he laid prostrate on. "But if you want to wager..." He grins when Kuramochi looks back at him.

"Bet" Kuramochi hands Sawamura the controller and stands to his feet.

Jun's face lit up wickedly. "If you can't get a date before we go on winter break you owe me--"

"--and me" Tetsu chimes in.

"Tetsu and I lunch on the first day" Jun proposed with a hand out.

Sawamura watched as Kuramochi's face fold with a look that seemed like he didn't have much to lose. "Deal" the two shakes hands. "And if I win you will take me and my date out"

"Whatever. As long as we can reach an agreement; our little belle can be your assistant while he is at it" Jun suggested while winking at Sawamura. "Cause I trust you"

Sawamura sniggers. "I got it, Spitz-senpai!" He holds up his index and middle finger and adds a cheesy smile.

"Who's a spitz?!" Jun almost climbs over the bed to strangle Sawamura, who only responds with a grim laugh as he hides himself behind the shortstop.

"Spitz-senpai, choking people is cheetah-senpai's job" Sawamura stuck his tongue out.

"Then allow me as tribute to continue the honor--!" Before Jun could get his hands on Sawamura Tetsu tugs on the hem of his shirt, snapping him out of his desire.
Jun snaps his gaze down at the captain, who still was mesmerized by the game. "Wanna go swing soon?" He asked, breaking his own train of thought.

"Oh" Jun's body loosens up as he snatches himself from Tetsu's hold. "Sure" he places his hands on his hips and stretches his legs out.

The sound of the door swinging open captivates all in the room. When the door opens and veils Miyuki an instant snarl cross his face. "Why are you guys in my room?" His eyes fell on Sawamura's for a moment.

Sawamura littles himself behind Kuramochi even more, looking down at his hidden feet from the pajama pants he wore that afternoon after declaring he wouldn't do anything else for the rest of the day.

"Buddies can't hang out?" Kuramochi chuckle at the expression written on the sweaty catcher's face.

"Since when in the name of hell are we buddies?" Miyuki emphasized with a repulsed look.

"Since--"

"--never" Miyuki cuts Kuramochi off before he could finish. The catcher pulls his things down and stalks over to his dresser in pursuit of new clothes.

Kuramochi clicks his tongue between snickers.

"Were you in the weightlifting room? Aren't you tired still?" Jun breathes out as he moves on the other side of Tetsu and sits on the second bunk.

"Tired?" Miyuki questioned.

Jun folds his arms over his chest. "Oh? You weren't in the game earlier, right?" He corrects himself before Miyuki can.

His theory was confirmed with a simple nod. "So you didn't see Sawamura's spectacular play either?" Kuramochi raises a brow as he gestures to said male.

May it be only Sawamura, but he could of sworn he noticed Miyuki flinch at the mention of his name. He tries to not pay it much mind.

"Play?" Miyuki repeats as he pulls out a maroon shirt.

"Yeah, he made a home run from an outfield hit" Jun grits out through his teeth.

"Oh?" Miyuki turns over to face Jun. "And who is responsible for that?"

"Left fielder" Jun replies quickly.

Tetsu sends a wary look at him to which Jun frankly ignored. "Really?" Miyuki wasn't easily convinced so it was realized that the story wouldn't grow much.

"Sounded different on my end" Kuramochi sniggers as he slings an arm over Sawamura's shoulder. Jun glowers at the shortstop, who only digs his face into Sawamura's shoulder to ignore the dirty look.

"It's fine, It's not like I care about hearing the full story anyway" Miyuki closes the dresser when he pulls out a pair of sweats.
Sawamura sucks in a heavy breath and bit down on his lip to wallow in melancholy.

"Your miss" Jun grins as he softly kicks Tetsu in his lower back. "Let's go swing" he pestered as the center fielder trudges to the door.

"But the game isn't finis--" Jun makes a look. "As if you weren't boring our little belle. I am saving his life" Jun opens the door when Tetsu packs up the game.

"It's hard to believe Jun isn't captain" Sawamura whispers when the two is out the door.

"Believable, actually" Kuramochi plants a comfortable hand on the brunette's head.

A noise emits from the third figure in the room. "So are you two going to get out?" Miyuki asked quite impatiently. Kuramochi gradually pulls his hand away from the brunette. "Sure, I have a deal to settle anyway. Might as well start now" Kuramochi skips over to the door.

Miyuki sneers as Sawamura pass by. No words spoken and no contact meeting. The air around them felt cool that the brunette could shiver, but he didn't want to seem weak in front of him.

The thought of either of them apologizing was nothing but a fantasy now. The way the tension escalated just from passing Miyuki was so thick that Sawamura knew right away that reconciling would be difficult.

Instead of staying quiet to raise suspicion from the others Sawamura forced a smile and said "Bye, Miyuki-senpai" as exultant as he generally would be despite his tone straining.

With no reply shadowing behind Sawamura closes the door to the room once outside.

A cold wind passing by then makes the brunette shiver. "Cold?" Kuramochi closes the distance between them as they begin to walk wherever.

"A bit" Sawamura sighs in exasperation.

"Wanna sneak out and grab something to eat?" Kuramochi pulls the latter to the side and looks around to make sure no one was present.

The first year's eyes widen. "S-Sure, but um, are we allowed to?" Sawamura asked while turning back in case there had been someone watching.

"We're just going to eat" Kuramochi flicks him in the forehead. "Eh, but you've been gone most of the day, won't coach realize? You're already on probation" Sawamura frowns as he wipes a finger over the imposed area.

Kuramochi sucks in a breath of air like he had forgotten. "Fine, how about another day then?"

"You plan on taking me out with the others?" Sawamura grins as they begin to walk to no where in particular.

"Are you talking about the deal?" Kuramochi almost laughs when he remembers the embarrassing wager he made with the center fielder. It wasn't much of the fact that if he lost he would be treating three people to a meal, but who he would exactly choose to date.

Dating was nothing but a reverie to the shortstop. With sports interfering between school work he couldn't really go anywhere outside of campus without a game calling up or practice being scheduled.
To have time for his lover was close to impossible of having an hour to himself.

"Is it even possible for you to date while playing? Seems rough" Sawamura comments as he stares at the ground his feet levitated on. A cool air undulates by, kissing at the exposed skin that was easily accessible.

The shortstop stretches his arm muscles lightly. "No, that's why most guys don't commit to relationships with girls---" Kuramochi place his hands behind his back and leans over them.

"Is that why you're..." Sawamura trails off when he catches a small glimpse from the green haired male. Instead of being oblivious to where the conversation was heading a stroke of air appeases his lungs as he lays up. "Yeah" Kuramochi answers sheepishly as he sequesters his hands into the front of his joggers. "That's why" a small hum could be heard from him through the crunching of the grass.

Sawamura watches as Kuramochi struts unbothered, not less skittish that he admitted his sexuality nor any lower than how he felt telling the only person likely to tell anyone else. Having a bond like that was something Sawamura was proud of achieving.

To him, the day was only progressively getting better in his favour. A relative silence renders as they continue promenading the baseball vicinity. No problems in mind and trouble out of sight.

It was a nice time to walk even if the odds seemed against you. The sky blushed orange and pink streaks and the clouds amalgamated with the hue of the incandescent rays excreting from the afternoon sun leisurely setting in the horizon.

A homely infatuation pulses into Sawamura's veins as he stares out at the picturesque setting.

It's only so much a person could feel invigorating in a day. Anyone ruining the moment would be a menace to society, thought Sawamura.

"Well, I am going to put in my toll" Kuramochi sighs aloud when they came to a stop Sawamura hadn't perceived.

"Oh, you're batting?" Sawamura takes in account of the common building the players were mostly seen attending during this time of day.

"Yeah, I need to get in some work don't I? Or else someone might steal my position from right beneath my nose" Kuramochi enlightens as he wiggles his brows at the brunette. He then looks up at the towering building; his shoulders drop.

"Wait, but you went to get a checkup on your arm. How was it?" Sawamura asked with concern tight on his face as he looks at his hanging right arm.

Kuramochi's face brightens. "I-It's getting better. I just have to keep stretching it out and not apply too much pressure" he informs with a thinned smile.

"You better not overexert yourself swinging" Sawamura says in a deep tone to sound malvolent. He cups Kuramochi's cheeks and squish them together tightly. "Or I will make Mochi out of you" he hesitantly head butts him and winces in pain even though it wasn't that hard.

A snort finds its way out of Kuramochi. "Nice pun" he plants a fist at the brunette's arm. "I'll be fine though"

Sawamura adamantly glares at him with squinted eyes. "You better" the two soon laughs before
relatively falling mute.

"Wish me luck" He winks at the first year before swinging the door open. Sawamura wiggles his fingers, no dismissal breaking his lips.

The moment the door clicked shut was when the emptiness paraded. Sawamura didn't feel completely alone even with Kuramochi being on the other side. It just felt weird to know he was gone. The one person Sawamura could openly talk to.

Slowly, Sawamura takes in a breath as he opens his eyes. Now what could he do? The question stood out more conspicuous than it sounded to himself.

Sawamura turns on his heel with the option in mind that he had a project to finish. The suggestion seemed better than waiting for fun to come to him-- even if he detested having the work dumped onto him. It gave him something to do.

The bell echos the hall when Sawamura closes the door to his locker. Fifth period was starting and he was officially late. "Just great" he grits his teeth when he begins to hurry to his class.

By now he was sure his teacher had it with the tardies to allow one more to slip by just because he was one of the good students. He was sure now wasn't the day just by the way his stomach lurch at the thought of walking in with all eyes on him.

Disturbing classes three times in a row that consecutive week-- classic.

He was dead. Sawamura already knew.

"Dammit" the brunette whimpers at the thought of getting detention. Not that he had time to spare, Sawamura was sure he had other things more important to do than cleaning the cafeteria or organizing books in the library.

Sawamura begins to pick up the pace, mentally calculating the foundation of his fifth period and how his teacher operated each day of the week.

With it being Wednesday came a few hopes of a lighter sentence than detention. Days like this the class hardly did work. Just a quick lesson and the rest of the period was off to finish homework the day prior or the new one.

And Sawamura had a lot of work to finish. He was so focused on his work for english that he forgot about his other classes that also didn't happen to pertain to yearbook.

Faster, faster, his legs went. Sawamura avoids slipping when he turns sharp corners and shifts into a reasonable pace when an administrator was present.

Then once behind their backs, Sawamura was back to peddling his legs.

"Almost there" Sawamura happily grins. "If I come in now the teacher is probably done going over instructions and will just let another student introduce me to the lesson" Sawamura clasped his hands at the supposedly high-scale rate of him getting in trouble.

Sawamura turns down a corridor holding his class, smiling at the thought of being off the hook. "I get to have a free day. I'm so luc--" Sawamura's shoes squeak to an abrupt stop when he discerns a
familiar physique leaning against the frame of the locker near the classroom. A hand dug into the elevated height of his pocket while the other tapped remotely at his phone.

F--

It felt like a nuke went off in the deepest trench of Sawamura's stomach. He hadn't known he was standing there long for recognition. His throat dried and his chest clenched with apprehension.

What could he do? What could Sawamura do in such a predicament? The convience of Daichi being out in the hall the same time he was going to class was nothing but a one out of ten luck.

As if passing by was an option. He was sure to notice. And standing still looking like an idiot was more obvious than trying to go around.

F-- He was screwed. There was no way around--

"Eijun" His name hit in his ears like a freight train. Sawamura's heart soon resuscitating seconds after.

He blinks back the dryness in his eyes from staring and stammers to answer. "Y-Yes?" Sawamura shifts the weight of his left leg to his right and clings tightly to the strap supporting his bag.

Daichi taps away on his phone concisely before slipping the device in his front pocket. Without looking up, Daichi folds his arms, eyes drawn to the tile floor.

"I've missed you" the weird tenderness of his cadence bewildering the first year.

"M-Miss me?" Sawamura musters out when the much taller male nonchalantly walks up to the brunette.

Sawamura tries to step back when Daichi's pace picks up, but is grabbed into his arms and instead of being brutally attacked out of nowhere, he is pulled into the anomalous comfort of the latter's chest. His voice hitches and his body stood unmoved as Daichi's fingers ran through Sawamura's hair.

"Yes," his voice rings through one end of his ear. He pauses, and the hand running through Sawamura's hair stops.

"Want me to show you how much I miss you?" His eyes met with the other first year's when he looks up. "Huh?" Sawamura blinks in confusion.

A blush of lust and eagerness spreads across Daichi's cheeks. Without awaiting any answer, the taller male yanks Sawamura away from the his spot and drags him into the nearest bathroom. Three students had already been occupying the sinks, talking more than anything else.

"All of you get the fuck out" Daichi barked with the door opened.

Sawamura swallows a lump in his throat as he watches the three guys exchange looks between him and Daichi. Another warning glare gave them the hint and they scramble with no intention of telling.

Daichi pulls his arms away and locks the door shut, breathing heavily as he stood pushed against the door.

An unsettling feeling welcomes itself when Sawamura watches the buff male slowly straighten himself. His body grows tense as he watches Daichi turn against the door so his back was against it.

Nothing was said for a straight few minutes. Sawamura's mind was still fogged up with anxiety at
being rushed into the bathroom. He wasn't interested in what Daichi had in mind and only wanted to be in class completing work. But a gut feeling told him that wouldn't be happening.

"Dammit" Sawamura hears Daichi swear, and looks up from playing with the sleeve of his polo shirt. Something seemed to be bothering the more aggressive male, but if he had to be honest, Sawamura was afraid to console him. A guy like him didn't need intervention. He belonged in a damn asylum.

"Eijun" Daichi coos breathlessly and presses himself away from the door and makes his way over to the innocent teen.

Sawamura chews at his bruised lip as he takes a step back, clinging tightly to the strap of his bag. Daichi's big hands slamming on his shoulders startles Sawamura, but after a moment, those hands find a way to remove the bag Sawamura was holding onto.

A warm breath fans at Sawamura's face when Daichi lowers the bag on the ground. Their eyes meet again, only this time a different look is plastered over Daichi’s face.

It was a desperate look. A look of misery and agony; angst, lust. Emotions were numbing Daichi to the bone-- that terrified Sawamura.

A hand is brought to caress Sawamura's cheeks. The brunette flinches at the burning touch. But Daichi holds him still, and a shaky hand traces the outline of the male's cheek. Sawamura's breath hitches again at the contact. His mind was spinning and his balance was beginning to weaken.

"You know you mean a lot to me, Eijun" Daichi says softly as he curls a finger down the opening between his collar. Sawamura stood paralyzed as Daichi's free hand maintained to hold him still.

"I-I-I do?" stammers the brunette, his eyes fixated on Daichi.

"Of course you do" his hold on Sawamura tightens. When the brunette winces the robust male can only politely smile and gently massage the area. "Don't you see how I treat you? Each bruise...each scar; what a master piece I've been creating"

A tight cry ripples out of Sawamura's throat unwanted. He bites back on his tongue to prevent any other inhumane noises from regurgitating. But even then he had not been punished for his sudden outburst. However, Daichi seemed to be more invested in the cry itself.

Anger boiled in Sawamura's veins, but no words could he use to process his hostility towards the rage inducing perpetrator.

Master piece? What was this, art?

Many questions bubbled in Sawamura's head that he wanted to be answered. He didn't think he could go another day walking blind.

"Each of them telling a story--sharing the close bond we have together" Daichi rips Sawamura's shirt off of him to reveal the level of mastery he had conducted on the faultless victim.

"A bond that only I have on you."

Like said many scars, bruises, and gashes held a vile memory; a merciless beating. Each done with a murderous intent.

Meniacly, Daichi laughs as he takes in every inch of Sawamura's healing wounds. Some
convalescent enough to not be seen. But areas turning a black or dark shade of purple held wounds on top of wounds.

"What talent I have!" Daichi exclaims as he ogles the upper portion of Sawamura's body with satisfaction in his work. When Sawamura moves a hand to cover himself the other male quickly pins him down.

"Ah uh uh" he whispers wickedly in Sawamura's ear and seductively licks at the brunette's cheek. A muffled, disgusted moan parts from his lips, much to Daichi's already growing amusement.

"What noise you make" Daichi laughs profoundly as he cuffs his fingers into the empty slots of Sawamura's.

Unhurried, he licks at Sawamura's cheek again, and this time holds him still for his tongue to travel down his neck. A shiver runs down the brunette's spine.

"S-Stop! Please! I don't like this" Sawamura whines when he pushes Daichi away from him. His eyes shake with trepidation and his innocence begins to knock on the door of a shattered world.

An indifferent look barges the male's attributes. A look Sawamura suddenly grew familiar to.

Shit.

"Hey, Miyuki" Kuramochi catches up with the retreating male once the last bell of the day rung.

The bespectacled male doesn't wait up for him despite his name being called. "Oi, don't ignore me!" Kuramochi yells when he pulls the brunette back by the time they exit the building.

Miyuki glares at the shortstop with indignation. "What do you want? You do know I have to suffer from being around you most of the day every day of the damn week right?" He calculates bluntly, walking in the direction of the dorms.

"You don't have to be harsh" Kuramochi complains as he speed walks up to him.

Miyuki rolls his eyes with no care.

"Okay, whatever. Have you seen Sawamura?" Kuramochi asked with concern lacing his tone. His face is pale with worry.

Miyuki almost stops if it weren't for the urge to want to get to his bed quicker.

"No" he answers dryly as he regrips onto his bag.

A frown tugs at Kuramochi's lips. He had texted the male earlier but he hadn't gotten any replies. They were just catching up when out of nowhere Sawamura shut down.

It may have been a little situation but Kuramochi wanted to know at least if anyone else heard from him.

No replies come from Miyuki since. Kuramochi wanted to bug him some more but had his focus primarily on his little brother. The catcher only looks over his shoulder when the screams of a group of girls caught his attention. The group had been clinging to each other while pointing at the two walking Seidou players. Neither of them paid them much mind, and Miyuki looks forward again.
"What do you have against him? Sawamura I mean" Kuramochi asked once they had fully entered the baseball team's living conditions. "You say his name with so much bitterness" he eyes the catcher mischievously, talking generally.

"Does it have to matter? I just don't see why you have to pay attention to some freshman with a camera" Miyuki remarked darkly with a scowl. The loathe for Sawamura was transparent. Miyuki had a proliferating hatred towards the one first year in particular.

Kuramochi doesn't respond. Maybe he was trying to find words to argue with that would outweigh the flimsy excuse he dissent from. Or, it could be he was trying hard to not kill the bastard for basically calling Sawamura irrelevant.

It sucked knowing about half the things Sawamura goes through. He may only know a few facts but he has grown to know that Sawamura was suffering. He could see it in his eyes everytime they look at each other. Kuramochi notes how jumpy Sawamura is, and how deep conversations branch from fond ones.

In a way he seemed ill to Kuramochi; fragile and impuissant.

Someone had to care. Not that Kuramochi didn't show sympathy for the brunette. As his older unbiological brother, he did truly care for him even when their relationship was distant.

There always seemed to be something on his mind and Kuramochi wanted to be a reason Sawamura didn't have to dread going to take pictures for them.

It's gotten far-- their relationship and Sawamura's converting personality. He seemed more happier, and that was all Kuramochi wanted. It always tears his heart when the first year looked down, as if someone had broken him completely.

"I don't know..." Kuramochi finally spoke through the tension. "Maybe he is just some newbie with good photography skills" Miyuki begrudgingly glares down at him when they stop between buildings.

"But" Kuramochi pauses as he meets with those piercing amber eyes. "Sawamura is special to me. I don't know why it's him specifically" he spoke genuinely, his words holding nothing but the truth.

"He means the world to me though, and I will be damned if anyone was to hurt him"

Miyuki smirks impishly. "If you ask me" he adjusted the weight of his bag on his aching shoulder.

"Sounds like you're crushing on your little brother" he clicks his tongue and hides his neck when Kuramochi pulls him in an inevitable choke hold. Even though the shortstop was much more shorter than him his timing was impeccable.

"Shut the fuck up. He's the only one I can call family so quit that dumb shit" Kuramochi snapped as he jabbed his fist into his pockets. "You know that" he adds quietly.

Miyuki stifles a small chuckle. "Right" he strings out the name with a hint of tease. "You like someone else right?"

Kuramochi grows stiff. "I have a good hint. After all you only turn red, stutter, get nervous, and make mistakes around--" "shut up" the shortstop shouts as he covers the catcher's mouth when players belonging to the second string walk by in fits of laughter. When they pass by Miyuki subsequently laughs on his own to Kuramochi's growing embarrassment.
"Forget it. You'll never understand how it is to actually love someone" Kuramochi nudges by him and buries his thought in his own fantasy. "More so because you're a heartless bastard"

Miyuki grins at the compliment. "Thanks!" He waves fervently.

Turning around for a brief moment, Kuramochi flicks him off. "You know that's not a damn compliment"

"I guess that's what makes it better" Miyuki watches the retiring figure surrender into his dorm he shared with Masuko. Once the male is gone Miyuki's face twisted.

The wind blows by and the faint noises of the players getting ready for practice plays in earshot.

"Right" he says to himself with a tainted expression. "A heartless bastard" Miyuki cracks his stinging fingers as he thinks back to what he said about Sawamura.

Giving him a stink look, avoiding him, seeing him around people who actually cared for him; Miyuki was infuriated by it all. He tries to not succumb to jealousy but a guy he saw that had it all how could he compete with that?

If no one was going to teach him that life was rough he'd figure it be him. No, Miyuki thought it had to be him. That he was the one to have to do it and break some sense into the gullible being.

They were all --the attitude he gives Sawamura-- nothing but warnings. To stay away from him. He couldn't befriend everyone, plus, how could he when he clearly remembers what Miyuki has done to him when they were kids? He almost took a child's life away.

And to see him fine and boisterous as if nothing happened was insulting in a way. Sawamura being so nice even though he tragically suffered. Miyuki hated the act. He hated that fucking smile that mocks his existence. Everything about that one-sided smile was nothing but fraud.

He wanted to make Sawamura remember the pain he caused him. Even though he played dumb when it came to relating topics in the past it seemed to work as a trigger. That way when the day comes he will finally see Sawamura shatter and lash out on him like he was suppose to back then.

Miyuki would let him do it too. He had already prepared for a life-threatening beating. Whenever Sawamura was ready he would be ready. All he had to do was talk to him first.

Till then, Miyuki won't utter a word to him.

"D-Daichi" a strained moan rips through the air as Sawamura's bare back scrape against the cold compression of the tile wall. His legs were helplessly wrapped around the buffer male's waist and arms slapped over his shoulders to secure himself.

Strong hands keep him in place from falling though. Daichi's arm being used as a propeller in the height of the smoothing texture belonging to Sawamura's back.

A hasty laugh emits from the overly excited male. His eyes trailing up and down Sawamura's frame as he holds him still. Without any moment to waste his pink lips press roughly against Sawamura's neck.

"N-Ngh" Sawamura sucks in a deep breath as he grips tightly onto Daichi's broad shoulders. The
first year whimpers at the disturbing feeling of Daichi's tongue nibbling and licking the sensitive area.

"I like those moans, Eijun" Daichi peppers messy kisses on the first year's neck, then sucks harshly on the already moist area. "Moan for me again!" Daichi pressed his upper body against Sawamura to hold him while his hands traveled to the legs securing his waist.

In one swift move Sawamura's legs were spread wider than he thought they could go. The pain striking at his inner thighs soon alleviate from the gentle massage Daichi creams onto the area with his fingers.

Tears sprung to Sawamura's eyes when Daichi leans into him, breath warming his face and eyes spectating the glorious sight of the helpless teen. A tight feeling wells into his chest when a bulge rubs up against the inside of his legs and pushed against his own.

Sawamura jumps at the contact, his breath caught in his throat.

"Feels good, doesn't it?" Daichi slowly begins to thrust against the first year's groin.

A hand scurries up Sawamura's upper body to feel over the slowly fading bruises he has created onto him. The insufficient pauses of breath being heard when Daichi's fingers discover bruises that still hurt the latter when pressed on. The sound was enthralling; Daichi wanted more of him. But not just that innocent voice of his-- his innocence as a whole.

Torturing Sawamura had been fun to him. But Daichi was starting to get impatient. He needed Sawamura now, and if he didn't he was sure to explode just by rubbing himself onto the teen.

"Shit" He swore at his hardening member struggling to break free. Fuck waiting, he thought. And fuck teasing him, to hell with that. He didn't think he would get much of this just from hearing cute soft moans and pleading cries...from a guy. It was cute. Sawamura was cute. Everything about him -- and his body-- voluptuous.

But what really caught his attention was the bulge in Sawamura's own pants that were tightening against the flap, begging to breathe. A concupiscent laugh ripples through Daichi's throat as he peels Sawamura from the wall.

"C-Can we please stop? I-I really do-dont like this" Sawamura begs while panting when he is placed on the ground and stripped of his shoes and socks so he is left in his trousers only. He props his forearms on the tile floor so he is standing on all fours.

"Why stop?" Daichi bends behind the male and pulls at the strip of his pants. "I would hate to take you from something your body is undeniably enjoying" he crawls over Sawamura so he stood on top of his miniature body and grinds over him so his bulge rubbed up his back. Sawamura shuts his eyes tight and shakes his head in fear.

"I-I'm not!" He blurs with tears slipping down his cheeks. "B-Besides we're both guys! This is wrong!" He exclaims and tries to move only to be secure by a strong hand.

"Don't fight it, Eijun. You're enjoying this" Daichi kisses Sawamura's cheek. "Admit it" he smirked as he runs a hand on Sawamura's chest and finds a hardened nipple.

Sawamura jolts with surprise and holds back another moan. "I'm not! Please stop or else I'll get Kuramochi-senpai on you!"

Daichi pauses, a creepy face plastering. "Kuramochi?" He says in a shaky tone.
"How dare you speak his name at such a moment, you bitch!" Daichi punches the side of Sawamura's face. Pain intensifies at the foisted area that makes Sawamura's body fall limp. He seemed to be spinning in oblivion and his vision collided to make it seem like he was losing conscious.

"And like hell he can do anything about it. If he does I'll kill him and you"

Sawamura swallows a lump in his throat as he watches the shadow through the tile floor lift up.

"I'm trying to be lenient and make you realize the excitement your body is feeling" Daichi unzips Sawamura's pants and yanks them down then does the same to himself.

"But I guess I have to force you to do that" Daichi strips Sawamura naked and holds him still to align his member with his entrance. Daichi hadn't planned on bringing any lubrication to easily slip in. And with his growing impatience stirring with his anger for Sawamura, he was going to have to endure the 'pinch' of pain journeying into him.

"S-Stop it!" Sawamura pleads more when a wave of pain overwhelms his body. Daichi holds him still, wincing himself at the tightness of the latter's hole. Having realize the guy was as innocent as they come, Daichi could tell this was Sawamura's first time. And he was going to be the one to take him.

It was perfect. Just how he wanted it to be. "Please, stop! I'm begging you Daichi! I don't want to do this!" Sawamura cries at the increasing severity of the pain.

"Would you just shut up!" Daichi yelled when he stopped midway. Sawamura shudders when a hand travels down his back. "If you cry I'll hurt you again" he pinches the skin of the brunette's lower back, watching the smaller male's back arch down. The erotic scene entices Daichi.

Sawamura remains silent as he directs his eyes down at his clinging hands. The feeling in his chest tightens; his body went immobile with no intention to move, and his mind was spiraling frantically with fear and agony. 'Why can't I move...? Why is this happening...? Oh god. Kuramochi please help me!'

A cry moves to leave Sawamura's lips when Daichi's hardened cock fully enters inside of Sawamura. Pain stocks in his lower abdomen. When another cry seems to almost break free Daichi slaps a hand over Sawamura's mouth. The cry reverberates his hand, and he keeps it cuffed so that no future noises alert any walking students.

With every thrust came a cry. Sawamura doesn't feel the pleasure that was making Daichi go wild. He doesn't see the ecstasy of forcibly getting onto him and taking his first time. This was nothing more than a joy ride for that sick fuck. That was all he was.

In his hand Sawamura screams, cries, wails, and screeches. Tears that flooded his eyes trailed over the cuffed hand, and yet his body moved in synchrony of the thrusting as if his body had adjusted to the maneuvering.

He hadn't known when this started, but Daichi wrapped his free hand over Sawamura's cock and starts to stroke him.

His body twitches and jolts every passing second. Sawamura hated this feeling. He hated this experience.

"Yeah" Daichi picks up the speed when he feels Sawamura's body react miraculously.
Seeing him like this was turning Daichi on more.

"I'm close" Daichi heaves out minutes later as he pushes through the aching of his hips. He rocks harder into Sawamura while stringing his fingers up and down Sawamura's.

The brunette can only profusely shake his head, screaming at Daichi to pull out. But his cries filter mute through his hand, and even if he could hear him the thought of giving in wasn't an option.

Then, suddenly, Daichi's thrust begins to slow. A warm feeling pools inside of Sawamura that made his body tremble.

Daichi impishly grins. "You don't enjoy this?" He laughs contemptuously as he moves in closer over Sawamura so he is audible.

Sawamura weakly stares at him, awaiting a comment he knew would come but would have hoped to avoid. Steadily, Daichi removes his hand from over Sawamura's mouth; saliva linking between those pink lips and Daichi's hand.

His slender fingers trace down Sawamura's jawline gently then grips roughly onto him which startled the brunette.

"But you came way faster than I did" Sawamura's face was directed downward to see the mess he hadn't known he created. His eyes widen. "N-No" he fights the words to come out. Sawamura was tired; breathless.

Maybe he had been too tired to realize that this even happened, was the excuse he wanted to make. But it was highly that Daichi wouldn't let him live it down.

"I-I didn't!" Sawamura screams.

"Don't be ashamed" Daichi ruffles his hair as he pulls out.

Sawamura looks over his body while Daichi steps over him. "Clean this mess up won't you, I won't let you live if someone grows suspicious" He threatens as he drops some towels by Sawamura's hand.

"R-Right" a frown pulls at the brunette's lips.

"I will...do that"

"Hm, Miyuki" Kuramochi breaks the catcher out of his thoughts.

The said male's eyes divert from the passing green trees over beside him to the laid back shortstop sitting beside him with his legs propped up and arms behind him to support his head. The smaller second year seemed to be cogitating over something.

"What is it?" Miyuki asked in a hoarse tone, worn out from the game they played in. It was a practice game against some school from the east to prepare them for their game that had finally been postponed to Friday-- two days from now.

Kuramochi doesn't look up. Even though he feels Miyuki's gaze burning into his skull for whatever reply to come out, he couldn't help but stare down the seat before him like he was trying to decrypt a code.
During the time of the practice match something seemed to be bothering the shortstop. Yet he still played flawlessly as ever to shield his building worries.

The megane could see he was frustrated. But talking to him during the game would have broken his mojo. He was doing impeccable as ever with Kominato that it seemed he didn't need an intervention.

Now, it seemed like they were finally getting to the climax.

Laying his head on his elevated palm, Miyuki awaits for an answer. He watches Kuramochi's brows furrow. "It's about Sawamura" he starts as he pulls out his phone to check for any messages. Miyuki tries not to make any conspicuous gestucilation.

"What about him?" Miyuki tries to hide the bitterness in his tone.

Kuramochi shrugs beneath him as he peeks over at the two players beside them. Kominato was staring out the window in the progress of going to sleep while Sakai was listening to music, browsing through his phone. His eyes shifts back over to Miyuki who was still looking at him.

"He hasn't responded to any of my calls or messages. I'm worried."

Miyuki clicks his tongue with agitation. "You're worried over a guy who is sitting in his room all day?" He remarks coldly as he looks over at a speeding car.

The shortstop shifts over in his seat. "It's the fact he hasn't responded. He usually does is what I mean" he purses his lips into a pout as he drops his phone onto his lap.

"And?" Miyuki spat. "You're suppose to be the overprotective prissy boyfriend that expects a message every two seconds?"

Kuramochi's eyes widen. He jerks his head around and hits the player in his chest. Miyuki cowers from the hit. "Relax. He's probably just not bothering you because he knew of the game" Miyuki rolls his eyes, attempting to not really comfort him.

"But this game was planned last minute, there's no way" Kuramochi says as he plays with the nail of his finger. He was tired, but not enough to fall asleep like other players. He had still been waiting for a reply at least to assure himself that Sawamura was fine.

More worries begin to fill his head. Miyuki rolls his eyes again when he takes a look at the depressed shortstop and pinches his cheek, snapping him out of his gaze.

"Sawamura is at school. The safest place prone to no danger" Miyuki reminds him.

Kuramochi reluctantly nods after thinking it over. "You're right"

"I know I am" Miyuki grins.

The shortstop hits him again. "You're also an ass"

"While you still believe that" Miyuki scoffs with a curt grin as he sinks into his seat. Kuramochi rolls his eyes this time as he allows the flow of the ride to soothe him.

'Miyuki is right. I need to relax' Kuramochi yawns tiredly as he stretches his arms out, purposely knocking an arm into Miyuki's face.

Annoyed, the catcher throws his arm back down and scoots over closer to the window to divide what little space between them. The green haired male sniggers at the reaction.
He's still an ass

The rest of the ride flows with no exchange in words. All players continued doing their own thing until the bus halted at the school an hour and a half later.

The players begrudgingly gets up when they are ordered to get off and spends the next few minutes gathering their things.

"I'm going to take a shower, wanna head together Jun and Tetsu?" Sakai was the first to talk as he grabs his things and walks off the bus when the two players join together to exit.

"Sure. Why not" Tetsu answers for the two of them, slowing out of range.

"Let's go stretch your arms out, Kawakami. You must be tired from pitching five innings" Shirasu offers as they walk off the bus. "Ah, I am. Let's do that."

Kominato walks off next, followed by Masuko, Miyuki and Kuramochi.

"I'm going to take a shower, I stink" Kuramochi comments as he takes off to his room.

Miyuki tilts his head as he watches the retreating figure. 'As much as he complained about Sawamura not responding he sure seemed more interested in a shower' he thinks to himself as he adjusted the weight of his bag.

He couldn't be blamed though. Kuramochi was most likely influenced by the fact that he would see Sawamura in the same condition as he always is. Or maybe he really wanted to get that shower out the way so he could sleep.

The Seidou catcher wouldn't say he had doubts of there being something wrong with Sawamura that shouldn't reach their concerns. Who knows what happened while they were gone.

All he could say is that it'll never be suffice to make him care. Miyuki takes the stairs to the second floor and enters his room, happy to be isolated from the others.

For the desire of quietness Miyuki wasn't fond of the idea of taking a shower the same time the others were likely to.

Taking one in the morning wasn't all bad. It had it's perks.

The latter kicks his shoes off and drops his bag at his side. He spends the next few minutes changing into clothes. Miyuki pulls down his long sleeve shirt to finalise his nightwear.

"Good, now I can finally sle--" a sneeze interjects his saying. Miyuki stands still for a moment and makes a look of disgust.

'Is the cold from that night finally catching up to me?' Miyuki loathe the idea of being sick. He wasn't much of a fan as any student dreading school would normally be. But for now he was to make due and get by it by sleeping.

Concurrently, Kuramochi had just finished taking a shower ten minutes later. After a long game the suggestion of being in the water wasn't as bright as an option.

The shower took no longer than five minutes. And in that timeframe he washed his hair and the
grime off his body.

As he exits his stall Kuramochi drapes a towel over his lower body and sits at a bench where his
clothes were located. He wasn't much fan of the idea of bathing in front of everyone like the guys
did either.

Asking people to wash his back and shit. It didn't stick with him.

"You're showering back here too?" Kuramochi jumps at the endearing voice that belonged to the
second baseman. He was covered up in a towel with his clothes in hand.

Heat flares Kuramochi's cheeks. They were the only ones using the back showers alone. For him to
not get excited was difficult to hide.

"U-Um, yeah" he stutters nervously as he unfolds his shirt to distract himself from abusing the view
of seeing his partner shirtless.

Even though it was practically what the second year dreams of at night the shortstop wanted to
respect the pinklet's privacy.

The senior's cheeks lifted with amusement. "I-I like to shower away from the others sometimes"
Kuramochi blurts to start a conversation—even if it was just for a moment.

The pinklet doesn't say anything as he places his clothes on the bench a reasonable distance from the
shortstop.

Kuramochi gulps when Kominato doesn't say anything. Maybe the idea of talking for a few minutes
was a bit far-fetched. Maybe he wanted to take a shower just as bad as he did.

When the door to the stall closes shut Kuramochi loses his composure. Seeing his partner like that
was unbearable to him. Sitting there for a moment, Kuramochi heavily exhales; his voice lowered by
the extremity of the water flooding nearby tubs and shower floorings.

Frustrated with himself, Kuramochi dries his lower body and finishes dressing up into his nightwear.
Kuramochi packs his things and walks out of the washroom.

Once outside Kuramochi makes a way to his dorm. His mind draws a blank with nothing of care. As
of now his body was too heavy to want to do anything. Wanting to lay down and just give in to his
exhaustion seemed like a more appropriate idea.

There were a few people he could hear swinging their dedicated hundred swings per day.
Kuramochi was glad to have done his already because the mere thought of lifting up a bat was
excruciating.

Kuramochi looks up to see he has reached his dorm room. A surprised brow arching as he opens the
door. Masuko was absent which gave him the room to himself.

"Alright" A weak grin climbs to his lips.

With a sudden urge Kuramochi looks over his shoulders to see if the male was even coming. Masuko
could be swinging with the others and that didn't really take a while to complete.

"Oh yeah" he says to himself when his eyes land on Sawamura's door. Hurriedly, Kuramochi drops
his clothes on the floor inside the room and then jogs over to the brunette's lone room.
As much as Sawamura would be annoyed of him checking up on him, Kuramochi was still unsure. He had to see for himself that his little brother was okay.

Kuramochi raises a fisted hand to knock on the door, but just as he was reaching out to respond a hand grabs at his knuckle and pulls him over to the side. "What the--!" Kuramochi almost bumps into the figure in front of him and shoots his eyes up so he is glaring at the unperturbed brunette that he hadn't noticed was outside.

Their eyes both shouting at each other with different means as their gaze connects. "What are you doing?" Asked Miyuki in a clearly bothered tone as much as he didn't seem to be.

"I'm checking up on him. What else?" Kuramochi snatches his arm away from him and takes a step back so they had room.

"Bothering him. It's late at night. He's asleep" Miyuki states the obvious.

"And? I can't check on him for a-" Kuramochi is in the middle of grabbing the handle till Miyuki jerked him away. "Don't. Sawamura doesn't like that"

Kuramochi blinks dumbfounded. "Um, okay" He looks back at the door that held Sawamura on the other side. "So, why do you care again?" Kuramochi asked with exhaustion. The shortstop was vexed. Tired from the game but vexed at Miyuki. He was confusing no doubt. Why all of a sudden has he switched sides? First he hates Sawamura's guts than he is convincing all needs that the latter should get as much sleep as possible without any disruptions.

"Never mind" he rids the thought away when realizing how dumb the argument might escalate. 'Maybe he is just looking out for him?'. Hopefully. If he had been directed into a new light than what was the point of dimming it away.

Meekly, Kuramochi scratches behind his neck and lets out a small yawn. "Well then I am going to bed. You should too" he proposed while eyeing the catcher up and down. The other nods in agreement but allows for Kuramochi to be the first one to step away as if he had no intention of ever leaving unless he did. When Kuramochi realized he just waves an enervated hand than isolates them into his pocket and tiredly stalks back to his dorm room.

Miyuki watches the shortstop leave off to his room, taking in the ounce of silence that soundtracked into earshot. He hadn't known why he stopped Kuramochi from checking up on the brunette. For some reason he was...annoyed? That Kuramochi kept hogging himself over the first year.

A part of him envied he could even become friends with such a benevolent person. But Kuramochi was just about the most outgoing person ever. It was only a short amount of time.

That or he just thought Sawamura should sleep without being frankly awaken all because Kuramochi had an inaccurate gut feeling. What could go on during Seidou that made him panic?

Ever since Sawamura did come over Kuramochi has been pretty much clingy. He was taking his role as an older brother to seriously. It was fun at first, but now it's creepy to Miyuki. 'Hm, maybe he is the one with a problem.' Miyuki clicks his tongue once the light of the dorm Kuramochi stayed in radiated through the windows.

'I get that he basically doesn't have a family but does that mean he has to force the fact onto that inconvenience?' Miyuki ascends the stairs leading to his room, where the door stayed propped open.

Pushing through the eerie feeling, Miyuki enters his room and closed the door behind him, taking in the lonliness of his dorm.
A sigh makes known to the room. "If that inconvenience can do this to Kuramochi and me it'll only be a matter of time till the team slowly crumbles" he pushes himself off the door and drops himself onto his bed.

He rolls over so he is looking at the top bunks' bottom, straining his eyes to look wherever in the mist of the tenebrosity.

The male grits his teeth, his jaw tightening and face contorting into something vile. 'I don't think he notices the big impact he can have on us all.' An arm lasped over his forehead and the other withdraws the rim glasses and sets them next to him on the bed.

All Miyuki could think as he leisurely creeps into a deep sleep was:

*Why did it have to be him?*

Chapter End Notes

Was it bad...? I don't know :/

But I hope I made your Sunday night/ Monday good at some point.. Tuh XD!!
Caged Upon Release

Chapter Summary

Just when everything seemed bleak for Sawamura, it gets even worse. Not to mention Miyuki and Sanada's blooming profound feelings getting in the way.

Chapter Notes

So, I was going to wait till I had about two more chapters done to upload all 3 at the same time, but that takes too long even when I have just one chapter to upload. I was sick today so the only reason I was able to edit and upload was because I stayed home. Excuse any errors, I tried my best. Enjoy the chapter :)

"They're cute," Sawamura comments when he bends down at the level of the small mammals that bounced fervently around for the attention of the brunette, wagging their tails exuberantly and panting excessively.

Reaching his hands through the bars, Sawamura couldn't help but pet them. How could he not? They were adorable pets that he wish to adopt but knew he couldn't. He knew his mom wouldn't allow him to, nor were pets allowed back in the dorms. It was heartbreaking to think about.

Especially when he wholly adored the baby Alaskan malamute that he couldn't get his eyes off of. It's icy blue eyes and pearly hybrid snowy white and ash black fur that felt like feathers beneath his fingers was all the more a heavenly sight to be grateful of witnessing.

Admittedly, Sawamura felt like he had fallen in love. He really wish he could adopt this one in particular. The infant dog seemed to have felt the same way as it shifted under his touch, inching closer to the cage to get a better feel of him.

Small whimpers vibrating it's jaw.

It was an endearing sight.

"Do you want me to take that pup out of the cage for you?" The owner had asked, quite enthused to see Sawamura intrigued in one of the most historically known domestic dogs that were used for their strenuous strength.

But Sawamura didn't seem to mind, or care.

He looks up at the owner, jagged facial hair and wrinkly skin that made his eyes hard to make out. Batting his lashes innocently, Sawamura muffled a sweet "please?"

The owner doesn't grow more reluctant. He sweeps by with the keys in hand, rounding the cage of dogs. Sawamura watched as the dog was retrieved, saddening the other pups that had hoped to be the lucky one.
It was almost sad.

Sawamura holds his hands out like a child eagerlyed to unwrap the biggest gift under the tree. The dog practically leaps into his arms, profusely licking his face, paws clawed harmlessly at his chest for a better grasp.

Swarmed in the kisses, and certainly not getting enough of it, Sawamura hugs the dog back, accepting the plentitude of love from the pup.

"You're a cute pup" Sawamura comments remarkably, eyes squinting at the pet. The corner of his lips fold up into a content smile, and he joins their noses together like how all the mother pets do to their cubs to tell them they are loved.

The pup sniffs, then out of instinct, sneezes softly on Sawamura. It was a cute sneeze. One that he would love to fathom over.

"Yup, some nice elderly lady brought it over, saying it was being attacked by much bigger dogs and didn't seem to have an owner" The man says, dismayed, pulling out a small pack of cigarettes.

The story was enough to break Sawamura's heart into pieces.

"I'm bout to go smoke, kay? I trust you to keep an eye on the pets" The man raises a certain brow.

Sawamura clicks his tongue as he turns over to get a look at the retreating owner already promenading out the shelter. The moment the door clicked shut he reverts back to the ecstatic dog. He runs a hand through it's disheveled fur and quietly whimpers.

"Who would ever want to get rid of you," Sawamura frowns as he let's go of the dog, watching it run freely around the diminutive shelter. The dog barked happily, as if shouting 'I'm free!' to all the other manageable pets around, boasting.

Sawamura laughed at how adorable the pup seemed, how full of life it was compared to when he came in offering to volunteer. And when he bent down face-to-face meeting all the other dogs the Malamute erupted with merriment.

It could have been the same for all the other dogs. If he had picked any of them they would have been running around just as excited, jumping up and down and peppering him with many kisses.

This had been a good idea. After being stuck in his room for a while on this particular Friday afternoon Sawamura had decided to leave campus to attend one of the community service events. Only thing is that no one in that committee showed up and he was stuck alone. Though that was no problem.

Being alone with the pets hadn't been as problematic. Feeding them, grooming them, and just talking was enough to put a smile on his face.

A loud bark from the malamute startles Sawamura into looking at him, watching as the pup jumped around for something in particular. Furrowing his brows, Sawamura catches something in sight and walks to one of the pet toys that the pup seemed to have want to play with.

"Oh? You want it?" Sawamura grins as he held up the toy, teasing the small pup into jumping euphorically for the squishy item.

"Ah" Sawamura grins impishly as he wiggles the toy, amused by the pleading barks and whimpers sounding from the dog. "You do want it" Sawamura huffs humorously as he stands upright,
scrutinizing the details on the toy.

The door opens, the bell on top signifying that. Sawamura, still wailing the toy in the air, turns around, seeming to not hear the malamute at the moment, is struck to find someone other than the owner stumbling in.

It was a women who seem to be around her late thirties. By her clothes, she was too sanitary to be walking in here. She came in holding a dog bigger than the malamute running around.

"Sorry, um, do you work here?" The lady had asked generously, walking over to Sawamura while trying to not step over the hyperly active malamute.

For the pup to not be in the way Sawamura calls him over and picks him up into his arms. Nervously, he stammers, "s-sorry I don't. The owner is right outside th--"

"Doesn't matter, I am in a rush. Do you mind just taking it off my hands?" She had already been pushing the neglected looking dog onto him before he could reply.

Even if the reprimand hadn't been directed towards him, referring to the dog as it was derogatory even for him.

Inaudibly, Sawamura muffles in acceptance, willingly taking the pomeranian into his free hand.

The women gingerly sighs in relief. "Thanks darling," she wiggles her fingers at him, indicating her dismissal.

"Um, bye. Thanks for the dog" Sawamura softly says, and once she has long left the building, he sets both small breeds down on the ground and watched them both begin to play around together, ilicting even more obnoxious barking and growling from the other strays.

"It's sad," Sawamura runs his fingers through the malamutes' fur, caressing it's body with his fingers, beloved. He sat against a wall at the end of an isle where the caged pets were held in captivity.

The malamute and pomeranian both profoundly marking him and boisterously making a statement. His heart swelled and ached at the sight of them both animatedly bouncing around, presuming their escape from their little hellhole.

And Sawamura only wish he could take them both. All the pets here didn't belong. It was as if they were divided between those who are securely sheltered, living homely with their rightful owners that feeds and bathes them, and if they are young, they could play with the babies and learn to protect.

But not them. Not those who had lost everything; lost their homes and loved ones, and managed to survive what little they could on their own before involuntarily ending up here against their will.

Caged.

Unable to do what they want and resentfully abide by the rules of the discontented people that grows agitated with every animal amplifying the population.

It's not like they asked to be here. So why torture them?

Why watch them suffer and grow skinnier with each day instead of publicising the need for them to get an owner and be taken care of.

They were all neglected. Disowned. And unloved.
"You guys don't deserve this," He thinks to himself as he hugs the pups close to his chest, feeling their mewls reverberate their jaw and against his chest.

Sawamura could relate to their pain in a way. Without anyone knowing the hell he goes through on a daily he felt just as caged and shut out from the world as these incorruptible pups.

It's just not fair, Sawamura thought in melancholy.

From there on Sawamura had always been secretly visiting the animal shelter. He hadn't been subtly trying to hide it, but whenever he found himself returning late back to the dorms he snuck in like a thief trying to rob a bank. The small puppies and adeptly trained dogs he had been teaching warmed his heart and bettered his day. The torment Daichi gave him seemed to only disgustingly proliferate day by day. It seemed that Daichi enjoyed when he wasn't happy, unsmiling and looking miserable; must have fit his looks if the bastard kept being pugnacious towards him. Going to his dorm hiding bruises had almost become a habit. And being around the others while sporting an innocent, untroubled smile was child's play. At this point he was a damn natural.

But every time Sawamura had finished stitching wounds that had reopened, or recovering from another traumatic experience of being raped, he always found himself stumbling to the shelter, playing with the malamute outside with the toys and sneaking away off to town to buy him his own special dog treats.

Despite the mishaps, Sawamura had learned to ignore most of it and look forward to seeing Kissi, the name of the malamute because all he could never do was stop kissing him.

It had fit him, and even if it sounded girly Sawamura hadn't plan on changing the name.

Maybe he loved Kissi more because they both had a lot in common and he was just about the only person that could tell when he wasn't well and peppered him with love, or it could be that Kissi was a remedy of coping. Maybe it was both.

Honestly, Sawamura didn't think too deeply into the reasons why. He only enjoyed playing with his personal pet, being amused by the tricks Kissi honed and finding ways to steal more treats than required of him.

If Kissi were to go away, Sawamura wouldn't know what to do with himself. Moving on to another pet after being with Kissi for so long would hurt like hell and not be the same.

That's why Sawamura was committed to coming every day. Spending each waking hour with Kissi until he knew he had to be in bed. Leaving always seemed to be the hardest part.

When Sawamura left, a familiar sense of dread overwhelmed him. He knew if he were to go back now he was stuck in the insecurities of a sanction he didn't want to be welcomed to. He knew that once he returned he would be swarmed with beatings, and questions from the worried players that never see him often if he were to get caught.

Sawamura was never prepared. Especially when he had to hold an inferior gaze with Daichi's predominant ones that scorched his body with fear. Filled his eyes with anxiety as he anxiously awaits a blow to the face or the ribs.

Being pushed around had become a burden too swiftly to grasp. Tugged on his own leash and not spared even a sympathetic, piteous glare.

Maybe not in terms of characteristics and heredity, but in qualifications, Sawamura's stats were as good as those of a neglected dog. A dog that can't live on it's own and is mindlessly walking behind
the steps of his careless owner. Watching as those around him be blindingly illusory by a small manipulative smile.

A dog barks in time of desperation. But one that is continuously battered down can never speak in fear of the peripheral anguish.

That's how Sawamura was. He wanted to say something, but it felt like his mouth had been kept shut by some mouth guard as if he was some rogue bandit.

Like he had no say in whatever went on.

That's the life of a dog who has been pushed around.

And Sawamura could honestly say, he's never been a fan.

Beatings came as often as meals would, and Sawamura didn't think his stomach had the capacity to take in more than it could digest. The bullshit had been enough for a day to stomach anything else.

"It's never fair for people like us," Sawamura muffles to Kissi when the pup rushes over with the tennis ball he had bought for him. He retrieves the ball, and rewards the young pup by ruffling his fur and cooing compliments at him.

"So, it's best for us to stick together, okay? We're best buddies, forever" Sawamura spoke wholeheartedly to Kissi, as if pouring his heart out for the love of his life. Standing to his feet, Sawamura rolls his arms in preparation before throwing the ball a reasonable distance from him, watching Kissi instantly dart off after the item.

A smile plasters it's way on his face when he watches the small malamute's body bounce with every jump at going for the ball, and how his legs stretched all the way out into small but flexible strides.

Heartwarming: a feeling Sawamura had been slowly warming up to whenever he spent his time around Kissi.

As if forgetting they were the only ones on the planet --even if he wished that were true-- Sawamura jumps at the call of his name, and spins around to find one of the few last people he wanted to see at his happy place.

The content on his face contorts into something more disheartened, and his stomach uncomfortably coils that he felt like he going to get sick. Sawamura tries to not lose his footwork, and instead forces that fake smile he had not been working on mastering while caught at the shelter.

"H-Hey, Miyuki..." Sawamura almost has to cough those words out, hitting his chest as if he was choking. He clears his throat, then turns back in the direction Kissi went off to, hoping at any moment he would return to allieve the awkward tension between them.

Sawamura honestly had no clue why Miyuki showed up here, or how he must have guessed him being here, but the most part of him didn't care. Their rocky relationship wasn't going to deter him into leaving a place dear to him with one of his best friends held hostile inside waiting for him every afternoon to return.

Miyuki's movements hault a few feet from the latter, eyes cascading over the male as if examining him. Making out any flaws and drawing certain boundaries. Clicking his teeth together, Miyuki folds his arms over his chest, seeming to not comprehend the setting he stood in.

"Why are you here?" He asked in a husky voice. He pushed those words out through the barrier of
his teeth. The gravelly words held Sawamura still, who didn't want to feel any type of shame--and why would he since he was just leaving the dorms to play with Kissi?

But Miyuki's voice sounded blameful, as if he had taken up some unspoken task. His tone alone made the hairs on Sawamura's arm erect.

Sawamura stares down at his feet to distract him, shoving his arms in the pockets of his jacket to improvise. He hadn't prepared a solid answer if he was caught, since admitting that he was there because Daichi's tormenting and his teasing dragged him into a lonely abyss of depression was a bit...rough.

And being able to face Miyuki, of all people, to spill this to, wasn't the kind of scenario he pictured at all. Admittedly, Sawamura had hoped to carry this on until he graduated from Seidou to finally get away.

Would he be able to wait that long though?

Could he handle two more years of constant agony? The mere thought made him want to cry.

"W-Why do you care?" The question came out more cold-hearted than he intended it to, and doesn't compete to meet with his gaze. He could already feel the intensity of Miyuki's eyes burning at the side of his temple.

An amused snort from Miyuki, followed by a heavy sigh. "Don't answer a question with a question, it's annoying" he grits his teeth, posing a looked that tried to not seem as irked as he sounded.

Sawamura only rolled his eyes as he blinks up at the sky, feeling the wind flow through his hair and kiss against his skin. "What's annoying is you being here," Sawamura thouht to himself, altering the weight of his legs from one another.

"I followed you here." That had caught Sawamura off guard. His eyes had finally zipped up and flew over to Miyuki, who had still been glaring at him from the moment he got here. Surprise was evident on his face. It had his mind wondering. Had he really followed him here? He obviously did, but why he came was the question sizzling in the back of his mind.

Seeing the look on his face doesn't faze Miyuki in the slightest. After not seeing him for a while and catching a quick glimpse at him sneaking out, he wanted to find out for himself why the first year kept disappearing. At the arrival of a dog shelter, Miyuki had been somewhat taken aback and not. Maybe he expected something small as this, or something a little more dramatic.

"And it's not cause I am some weird stalker" Miyuki says before an assuming smart reply came.

"Stalker?" Sawamura mutters to himself with a scowl. That trait didn't sit still with Miyuki, who, may he remember, was never the following type or the person to wait around. It was like he was following some code of conduct, and to a certain extent could only commit to so much.

"Everyone is worried about you."

"Worried about me?" Sawamura hadn't mean to choke that out with so much disbelief, but hearing that from Miyuki himself was making things difficult to understand. He still wanted to know why it was him to come and not specifically anyone else.

"T-That can't be true..." Sawamura trails, trying to keep himself together. He didn't want to be easily decieved; accused of being gullible because someone as superior as Miyuki gave him false hope.
"Well it--"

"It's not true!" Sawamura interjects rather loudly, digging his teeth at the bottom of his lip to prevent from saying anything that might result in him getting a free vacation ticket to hell.

Unclenching his hands that he hadn't known he was squeezing for god knows how long, Sawamura let's out a small sigh, and fixed his gaze on Miyuki's calm ones. The feeling of the blood rushing back to his fingertips cooling him in a way.

"N-No one notices when I am sad...o-or when I am in pain physically or emotionally. If no one can see it then why should I believe you can? Why? Cause you're the only one here?" Sawamura wept, his voice cracking. Hot tears breaching the corner of his eyes.

Sawamura had to say, he was glad Miyuki was the type to not lash out before hearing the whole story. He was for sure that if it had been anyone else they would already be at each other's throat, and Sawamura doubts he would be the one winning.

He watches as Miyuki's shoulder slightly raise, seeming to try and figure out himself why he was here or how he should correctly formulate the next few words. Sawamura was clearly fragile; vulnerable to even the tip of a needle. A lost puppy that couldn't find it's way back.

"Doesn't me being here alone show you enough that I care?" Miyuki was hesitant to say, but he looked Sawamura dead in his eyes when he said it. Sawamura didn't know whether to feel appreciated or not, to finally have someone notice.

But why did it all seem so early?

So...surreal?

Miyuki takes a few steps ahead, heading over to Sawamura with a smile that made the latter's face mold green. The placid look plaguing his features and that cheeky grin of his lips that screwed with Sawamura's mind--because he had no idea what was ever on the guy's mind-- was hard to look away from.

With a look like that it was hard to not accuse him of conspiring anything.

Sawamura tries to not be easily decieved by Miyuki's words. Tries to not let that cunning, arrogant look of his overwhelm him. But that's exactly what Miyuki was. He was too overwhelming.

"N-No, you don't," Sawamura spits out, tightly shutting his eyes to shake the thoughts free of his head. He clings to the arm he was holding, feeling his nails begin to dig it's way through his skin. Calming himself, Sawamura almost chokes out, "you're only telling me what I want to hear," costively. His heart painfully aches at the assumption.

More tears began burning at the corner of his eyes as Kissi slowly became a bedim in sight. His tears obfuscates his small stature, and eventually it's like Sawamura couldn't see anything at all. It was like he had vanished off into the murk of nowhere.

The setting wasn't even what took him by surprise. Seeing Miyuki now, face close up, startled him, and Sawamura steps back, trying to keep whatever ounce of composure he had saved up in him left.

"How can you be so sure?" Miyuki grimly smirks at him. It was creepy. The bespectacled catcher was beginning to act out of character. He seemed jumpy, itching to see the look on Sawamura's face worsen in fear. Like he was obsessed.
"What if..." Miyuki pauses for a moment, "I am telling you something you want to hear, but rather nothing you can't believe" he steps closer. Sawamura fidgets to stay still, his breath grasping at his throat.

"Maybe you've never had no one in your past life to support you; care to even see how your day went," Miyuki's face then contorts with an uptight look that could have made anyone stop dead in their tracks and rethink of any time they might have pissed him off that would end up with them wrestling it out.

"And that's exactly why you're in denial. And all I did was say I was worried" Miyuki wickedly grins.

"T-That's just it!" Sawamura exclaims, taking a few steps back so he was a reasonable distance from the taller brunette. The stoic look grinding on Miyuki's face hardens as his eyes birth an icy, unsettling feeling that made the first year almost wet himself.

Shakily, Sawamura takes in a small breath, attempting to ease his pulsating heart and his uneven breaths. A somewhat easy sensation undulates by, seeming to carry away what growing worries were building up on him.

"The real Miyuki doesn't care..." Sawamura says in a stagnated tone. He drags his eyes to his feet to avoid meeting the burning glare that he knew had not belong to him. It was the wrong Miyuki.

"Not about me...or anything concerning me" Sawamura murmurs, hugging himself tightly, trying to fight back tears that could no longer hold themself back.

"That's why I don't care" Sawamura snapped, tightening his clammy palm while still letting his gaze hang down at the tenebrous, transparent plank he felt like he was practically floating on.

"That's why I rather go on without you or anyone else knowing, because you, people like you," Sawamura refers to Daichi when he says this, "won't give two shits without thinking of yourselves first!"

At that same moment Sawamura's eyes shot open the same time everything went black. At first, he hadn't known where he was or what that constant ringing was in his head. Pieces of what happend gradually began resurfacing much to his displeasure, and when Sawamura had fully sat upright on his bunk and took in everything, he let's out a lengthy sigh before slamming back down on his clamped pillows.

When everything began sinking in, a beleaguered sigh runs by the border of his lips. "It was just a dream, wasn't it?" He said to aloud to himself, closing his eyes to take in the moment, allowing for his heart to rest from nearly exploding and for the sudden rush of adrenaline to waver.

He couldn't believe he really dreamt of that. Talking off at Miyuki? Was he insane? Sawamura knew he daydreams about the day someone would eventually put Miyuki in his place, but did he have to acknowledge the fact that Miyuki could care less?

As more pieces came hitting at the back of his head like a bolt of lightning, all Sawamura could do was harbour the familiar redness in his cheeks from the swelling embarrassmen.

Maybe he was doing himself a favour. Maybe. Sawamura wasn't sure how comfortable he felt with Miyuki out of anyone else to know what went on in his personal life, and it's not like he would go from consistently teasing him on a basis to acting all friendly and sympathetic in less than five seconds. Yeah, that didn't sound like Miyuki at all.
Seeing him spare kindness was like a spider unthreading a fly to live longer. It was horrifyingly repulsive.

Another stressed sigh ripples through the brunette's throat as he thinks over what took place in his dream. Vividly, he remembers how flushed he felt when Miyuki voiced his concerned. He would admit that a part of him almost fell for the deception of his own dream and outwardly accepted Miyuki's fraudulent worries.

Sawamura frankly slaps a hand over his head, swearing to himself for being gullible. He wanted to avoid the burning sensation tickling around his neck, and further refrains from doing something dumb by bashing a pillow over his face and letting out an even more distressed groan, one that he was sure no one outside the dorm could hear.

It almost became laughable: Miyuki being worried. That was a fantasy dream. Admittedly, most part of him figured out it was a dream because Miyuki was worried. But like said, a part of him hoped that his fale worriment was real.

After recapping what took place from the point of Miyuki visiting him was nothing but a false interpretation of his mind, Sawamura hauls himself off the bed, still clutching the pillow close to his chest.

He contemplated through the temptation of facing everyone for another purgatory day or turning back in his blanket and disappearing off the face of the earth. The second option was always the most beguiling, but he knew if he missed school it would only add to the consequences. And now didn't call for any of those, even if he didn't want to face Miyuki.

Begrudgingly, Sawamura scooped himself up from the bed and found himself dressing at his own leisure. Because he had been standing in front of the mirror it was hard to not miss the many purple and black bruises painting his body and the few scars that he for sure knew to be permanent.

Like a damn Picasso artwork. If Daichi was trying to make a statement--this was it. The definition of absurdity.

Looking at them made Sawamura cringe, but his eyes couldn't look anywhere else once they landed on a new set of fresh wounds. What a sight. It was the perfect meal to have his stomach recoiling into itself.

A disappointed grunt hussles out his mouth as Sawamura applies the rest of his clothing on. He winced when he settles his shirt down at his torso and his expression hardens when he sits himself down with a tub of ointment and other pain relievers in hand.

Sawamura knew he was just withholding the inevitable, and postponing a trip to the emergency room. But while at the time he knew there was too much for the team to be worried about someone as sorry as him, even if he was battering himself up more with each day.

Turtlenecks and jeans made up most of Sawamura's daily attire. Generally, it had already found a place in his wardrobe so no one can say there was something off about him. Today was a windy day anyway; winter was slowly arriving after all.

But, nevertheless, if Sawamura hadn't been wearing a jacket or sweater than it was surely a long sleeve or a lone turtleneck. It had become apart of him on a basis where if he did it suddenly then it would raise unwanted attention.

When Sawamura had finished addressing his exacerbating wounds he shuffles over to his dresser,
burying them underneath his clothes--away from anyone becoming skeptical of his being and goes unwantedly ransaking his belongings.

Later that morning, Sawamura met up with Haruichi and Toujou, who had been apart of their class council to take care of demands forwarding to their year.

Sawamura would be wrong if he didn't say he had totally forgot about the "All-Year School Festival" that the school had hosted. He couldn't believe a week passed away that quickly.

The All-Year School Festival was an event hosted for all three years in enlightenment of semester exams. Looking at things now Sawamura hadn't known how fast the year was going, but a part of him was glad it was almost over. Once summer hits he wouldn't deny a train ticket back to Nagano. Two months with his family would restore more than enough to refill him when he becomes a second year.

"Are you excited, guys?" Toujou had asked as he took an anxious spot beside Haruichi. They had been stationed on the sidelines of the football field, which had already been embellished for the eminent game of Bo-Taoshi. Sawamura could already see that being interesting against the second and third years. And no doubt the underlings would get demolished since it's their first time playing on and against a high school level.

There were many more things to be just as excited about. Seeing all the other events such as relays, and food stations serving seafood-- Seidou had really outdone it. Sawamura was thrilled to even be able to see the day, much less stand to get out of bed to see it.

Haruichi must have felt the same way because after a quick glance at Sawamura he replied with a rapturous "yeah!" through the steel winds of the fall.

"It's going to be packed today, It's ashame council members can't play" Haruichi sighs in distraught, his lips curling downward at the recollecting thought. "But I guess it isn't as bad watching other people around you have fun."

"Well, at least Kaneda-kun made it clear that we can still eat and cheer for our suggested team, and near the end we could participate in the main events if pleased" Toujou reminds the pinklet while patting an assuring hand on his shoulder.

"Bo-Taoshi is a bit...brutal for me" Haruichi coughs bitterly, though he didn't seem that fazed to not be able to play either, not that he seemed like the athletic type to begin with. "Besides you have to register your name prior to doing such events like Bo-Taoshi or relays."

As if forgetting, Toujou shapes an 'O' with his lips, posting a sorry look for them all.

A huff departs from Sawamura's lips as he twist himself around, toes of his shoes digging up a small hole in the dewy mounds of dirt and grass. The gusty winds flood by, passing through his fringes and running against whatever skin laid exposed. "Who elected me as historian in the first place anyway?" Sawamura pressed, lips pursed with unequivocal bitternes. He hadn't entirely sounded mad but knowing he would be missing out while whining about not being able to partake in the event was a bit frustrating to ponder.

Tensing up, Haruichi shamefully shifts his body over to face the latter, face guilt-ridden but a sense of pride remaining on his face. "I-I did" the pinklet raised his hand up for a brief moment before it drops back at his lap. His face had already been burning a familiar tomato red.

"B-But only because I wanted us to spend the year together somehow! You're always gone and I just
wanted us to find something to do" he admits, glimpsing back down at his lap while watching a lizard idly scatter by.

Sawamura remained silent for a while, heaving out another small groan. He wouldn't fault Haruichi; the latter had been trying to recruit him to do more things lately that he significantly had been ignoring up until now. But if it didn't involve his spread for the yearbook or visiting Kissi he saw no real reason to go out.

"It's fine...just tell me next time," a reply doesn't wait up for the brunette when they are brushed with two upperclassmen who had been apart of their class executive board as well.

"Hey, guys, you must be the first year board members of your class" one average height girl said with curly brown hair and squinted, dark black generic eyes. The guy next to her honing a small curly beard and had shaggy orange-blone hair with black rims on hands them all a paper that had been glued in a single stack.

Toujou offered a cordial smile, taking the paper in hand while being the first out of them to reply. "Yes, we are."

This time it was the guy who spoke up, enunciating what the flyers in his hand represented. "These are the itineraries for how the day will flow. Each class executive member is associated with any kind of work raffled, and this year you guys were given the opportunity to manage the teams" he spoke coherently.

"Since we were given the selection of announcement-- calling what event goes next from the overhead-- you will be able to hear ten minutes in advance what event will be next. From there you will check in what teams are participating and guide them to their checkpoint."

"Sounds simple" Haruichi shrugs, grabbing a few other sets if equipment that they had ready for them like a clipboard and pen.

The two upperclassmen only made an uncertain face. "We'll see, but no worries" with that they were gone, off to recap with other members.

"That didn't look reassuring at all" Sawamura commented at their flimsy, implausible statement. Were they trying to scare them? This was the closest thing to a picnic, there shouldn't be anything to worry about except noise level and an accrued crowd.

Toujou and Haruichi tried their best to muster an undeterred expression, but that proved difficult when their faces were between the realms of apprehension and dread. Maybe a mix of both.

"Well, wanna head to our stations? The first event starts soon, and I am sure the students are on their way" Haruichi proposed brightly, choking down whatever worries were built up in the back of his throat.

The other two make a look of agreement before they all get their things and relocate. Around the time they got to their stations, and went over what they were suppose to do with a director and coordinator, the other students and school officials had been arriving. From where he stood, Sawamura hadn't taken notice of the many food stations advertising different cuisines, nor the many decorations such aasd balloons and banners hanging around to bedazzle the place. Many small activities were sprinkled around different vicinities of the field for those not taking part in the major events. And from the many baffled looks and exhilarated faces walking around, Sawamura could infer that this had to be better than the previous year.
From looking around, Sawamura barely made out any of the guys from the baseball team. He knew they couldn't be practicing. Guessing correctly, Sawamura then spots a group of third years consisting of Masuko, Sakai, and Tanba walking together, all heading to the bleachers where the students were all being settled for the morning introduction. He had to admit, Sawamura wanted to see if the guys planned on doing any of the activities here. He knew it would be amusing to see them break out of their comfort zone and do something other than baseball.

A new breathe of air can't kill anyone after all.

"I get we are not playing," Haruichi’s voice finds it's way over to Sawamura's ears through the exuberant commotion of the crowd. Looking over his shoulders, the brunette cracks a smile when he spots the nerve-wrecked pinklet sitting at his chair, nails picking at each finger for ease. "But even though we will be managing teams it still feels like a rush. Like we are playing" A small chuckle reverberates his jaw nervously.

Sawamura wholly understood. Sitting down preparing what team got what number had him over edge just as much. And half the reason wasn't even because of the event. It was more so he was happy to get out and do something like this. Being in this position, no one was capable of physically hurting him. Not even Daichi.

He would have to thank Haruichi for this later during the year.

It was a moment to definitely smile about. To feel free for once and breathe fresh air that hadn't been choked on. "Like a dog leaving it's cage" Sawamura smiles sweetly, his chest rising with little pressure. Being able to breathe in and out, smelling the grass and the aroma of the cooking food, Sawamura couldn't feel anymore free than this...

...until he ultimately returned to the wretched formality of his dorm room.

"Alright, everybody!" That had been the principal's voice that made the students go silent. Sawamura sharply inhales, leaning forward on the table before him to better concentrate. As the introduction ceremony strings on, Sawamura's eyes fly around, scouting anyone else he might recognize through the crowd of stadium filled bleachers. No one in particular stood out, and the three regulars he spotted earlier were plain out of his sight now that everyone else flushed in. He took no time in trying to pressure himself over who was here and not and went on listening to the rest of the opening speech. With the closing phrase of "let the games begin" those participating in the first event had already eased down the bleachers to go change, while those watching began playing games nearby, jamming to whatever music aired via bluetooth.

"Which event is first?" Toujou asked delicately, scanning through the long list of events on the itinerary, but nothing long and tedious.

"4x100 meter dash...hm? Are they incorporating these kind of events?" Haruichi sounded a bit confused as he scanned through the list again, seeing a few other races ahead. Field days usually composed of relays such as, but Haruichi didn't know why he had a feeling that he thought it might be something different.

Guess not.

Sawamura had to say: running events were his favorite. He enjoyed watching everyone give their all into the movement of their bodies and the limitations their endurance could so long carry. Seeing plot twist such as first getting last or vice versa had always been the most exciting part.

"Sprinting. Hmph. I wonder whose in tha--ow!" Sawamura jumps at the wails produced by
Haruichi, and upon turning around eyes widening when seeing the older Kominato, hand still on his little brother's head and smirk as contemptuous as ever. Compared to how Sawamura would normally see Kominato on the rare occasions around achool, he was now in a blue uniform with white bolded embroidery, a number 4 plastered on the back of the jersey.

"Ah, Aniki, why did you do that?!!" Haruichi hissed, though did not attempt to compete with the amount of superiority lurking behind those sealed eyelids.

"Because why not?" The older Kominato hums as he walks around the table, the sadistic grin persisting his features while his glare scorches his little brother's look of turmoil.

Haruichi must have not taken notice of the outfit when he asked, "what are you doing here?"

A cunning chuckle from his older brother even has shivers going down Toujou and Sawamura's back. "I'm here to race, little brother," he says in a bitter sweet tone.

"Race?" Haruichi's jaw slacked, not taking his brother as the running type, and admittedly, Toujou and Sawamura would agree.

"I'm sure that's what I said, you seem stunned. Are you shocked?"

Sawamura was amazed at how his Oni-san was able to make his words sound more derisive despite them not being directed at him. Even if it was to hide away his anxiety for a race, he had been pretty good at making the other feel targeted. Not even, Sawamura was also a bit bewildered at the news. He didn't exactly have a clue that Ryou-san enjoyed running.

Too surprised, Toujou was the one to hand the pinklet his number. They would be in the first lane. As more people came to sign in --which the three had been handling their jobs well-- Sawamura began getting a bit too excited. All the entrees seemed to be good runners and couldn't wait to see the end result.

Not to mention they were all athletes.

"Gyaha! Sawamura? You're stationing the entry?" Kuramochi sped to the area Sawamura had sat in, who kindly gave away the number to what seemed to be the final team. After giving away that small smile of his, Sawamura's eyes revert to Kuramochi, taking notice of the identical uniform Oni-san had been wearing. He rose a curious brow of his own. "Are you running as well?" He asked, directing his head over to the stretching pinklet.

"Yeah, since this is the third years' last field day they asked me to participate in most events with them" Kuramochi told, grinning mischievously as if he had been waiting for this moment ever since last year.

"Did you sleep?" Sawamura couldn't help but ask as he handed Kuramochi a number one to stick to his shorts. He could see the shortstop was obviously fervent to be running.

That was no surprise. Running was his specialty. It was in his veins.

Leaning in with that crook smile of his made Sawamura snort. "Barely. But so what?" Kuramochi whispered with a wicked scowl enhancing a more menacing look.

"Right, because nothing can overpower the great Cheetah-senpai" Sawamura pumps a fist in front of his body.

Kuramochi gives a similar gesture, "right."
Both of them broke out in laughter.

The young brunette leaned back in his seat when Tetsu and Jun arrived. The team had looked formidable enough to Sawamura. This was the heart of the batting line-up, no doubt these four would leave you wanting more than a research of their run.

"You see us, belle, we look pretty tough don't we?" Jun haughtily laughs. Given the looks nearby teams gave Sawamura could tell he wasn't liked much. Or maybe the baseball team as a whole, icy glares had been on the older Kominato ever since their arrival to him.

"Definitely. Race well" Sawamura saya blissfully.

"All teams ready?" Takashima Rei dressed as a referee asked.

"Hey, guys, before you race can I take a quick picture?" Sawamura asked in panic after reminding himself, holding up his camera. With no objections, and the four getting into a casual pose, Sawamura snaps a few shots before they are yelled over.

With the baton given to the pinklet, it was clear who had been starting. Tetsu was second leg, Jun third, and Kuramochi fourth. It was a good setup, especially having Kuramochi as anchor.

"You got this big brother," Sawamura grins to himself as his eyes flicker over to the pinklet setting himself up in the box.

"Do you think they will win?" Sawamura asked Haruichi, stifling a laugh at the puzzled pinklet. "I still didn't know he'd be interested in such things."

"I mean, he has to get to the base somehow," Sawamura teased with a small chortle that makes the latter click his tongue in irksome at the joke. "Besides, it's his last year" the brunette reminds him.

In audible hum tells Sawamura otherwise. He didn't really see the wrong in the older brother taking part in an event he was sure Haruichi himself would get into when he became a third year. It could be a brother thing, but Sawamura would never know. He wasn't that invested in the young pinklet's personal life to be bothered--not that he had the time for it either.

"By the way, you seem to get along well with the other guys on the team" Haruichi had taken very sweet care of the way the four looked at Sawamura like he was family, talking with him as if they known each other the longest.

It wasn't hard to decipher.

Sawamura rigidly nods, dazed by the statement, cuffing a hand over his slightly agaped mouth.

"I mean, you are their belle after all" Haruichi teased, making the brunette's face withhold redness.

'Crack!'

The starting gun breaks through it's sound barrier, altering those that had been preoccupied and allowing those running to take off. When Sawamura pushed the comment away he glanced over along with his other two friends, they both grew shock at how fast the older Kominato's legs were moving to keep up with the other first legs on opposing teams. Sawamura would gladly divulge at the sight, bewildered that baseball training could make a person react this quickly to the sound of the gun. Then again, once the ball left the bat they were taught to race against their opposing teams to make it to the base on time, because every grueling second mattered.
Compared to the short pinklet, the only thing the others had on him was size, and that didn't seem to be enough to push forward, until they got to the second leg. From there, Tetsu had gratefully snatched the baton and took off with just as much devotion. Even if they hadn't been taken this seriously no doubt they were taking it lightly either. With his height and composure, Tetsu still persist to remain as an important piece of the relay.

The crowd had been raging with delirium at the intensity of the race. It must have been that this event had never been this messianic in a lot of years, or maybe it was, just this year happened to just as great as before.

"This should be interesting," Sawamura thought as he watched Jun round the curve swiftly, keeping a manageable but close lead with second place. Perfectly, he hands the baton to Kuramochi and from there the shortstop practically kicked dust in his opponets face. No one seemed to have expected this from the baseball team skillful line-up given how boisterous everyone was yelling and cheering.

Kuramochi kept the sacred first place till he reached over the line, notoriously shouting with his tongue sticking out. Sawamura hadn't felt the smile slapping across his face until the pain in his cheeks struck and plagued his face a red familiar to the young Haruichi's.

"Oi, Bakamura, did you see that?!" Kuramochi exclaimed fervently, running over with his arms stretched out. He had been breathing heavily, exhilaration and relief transparent over his face.

Ignoring the fact his name had been made fun of, Sawamura gives his said brother a notable high five. He winces at the hard contact, then shoots the second year a look that isn't taken note of. "Yeah," Sawamura heaves out while rubbing fingers over the inflicted, sensitive skin. "I didn't know you four had it in you to sprint, you all did well" Sawamura beams radiantly just when the other three came by, faces red and hair slightly disheveled from the wind.

"The fact that we got first shocked me even more," Jun pants breathlessly, still trying to catch his breath. He stretched his arms up, relieving any muscles that had now been drawing back pain.

"Hyaha! For once you ran faster than your mouth, Jun-senpai!" Kuramochi riposte with an impish grin. The third year makes a sour look, trying to not seem bothered by the obvious good joke. Tetsu smiled while Kominato's lips thinned comically and faced away.

"Oh it was funny? It won't be funny after I kick your--"

"Good job on the win" Tetsu interrupts before anything inappropriate meaningfully slips out the combative thirds mouth. Because propriety was a major component when keeping a prominent title after coming in first.

"Right, see you guys next event?" Kominato asked with a small grin.

"Hell yeah!" Kuramochi cackled, and with that they depart to do whatever had been tracing the back of their minds with eager. Sawamura had to say he was sad that they had to leave, leaving him with his own friends to work. He wasn't entirely opposed to doing this project with the two, but he wasn't a fan of being involuntarily dragged into the bidding either.

The day had cut on just like that; repaying some unknown debt instead of having fun like all the other first years were. Many activities and events passed over, some intriguing and a little bit of them not.

In the heat of sitting for the past-- nearing-- 3 hours and bitterly gaping at any student or official walking around with food, Sawamura's stomach was just about ready to cave into itself.
The grumbles of his stomach voiced itself for him with no words being passed, and when Haruichi heard the second explosion he faced the highly agitated brunette with a cheery smile. "Hungry?" He gave that cute giggle that always made anyone question his gender. It was so feminine just like the rest of his figure.

Sawamura lifts his head suddenly, head throbbing from the intensity of the heat and not eating since a night or two ago. Sawamura really hadn't remember, but he did know he was spending his allowance more so on Kissi than on himself like suppose to.

"Y-Yeah" he nods cautiously to prevent unneeded injuries to himself. Haruichi does the same as he twist in his seat, eyes pinning against the brunette's frame. "Then let's eat together, Toujou and Kanemaru are eating here together so they can cover for us" the pinklet suggested, standing to his feet. He goes to notify the two of their absence; Sawamura reaching his side not long after.

Together, the two heads through the food stations towered together, lines exceeding more than Sawamura's own patiency. The smell of the food up close and watching people eat was making his stomach rumble even more. He was just lucky that it was loud for anyone to hear, otherwise he would die of embarrassment.

"What do you want to eat, Eijun-kun?" Haruichi asked while staying close to the latter so they weren't lost in the growing crowd.

Sawamura ilicts a pop noise from his lips, face folding at the sight of every long line that he saw. Seeing them made him not as hungry if he knew he had to wait in at least one of them.

Thoughtlessly, Sawamura shrugs. "I'll eat whatever you want" he says loudly, trying to speak over the engaging crowd. Because whatever Haruichi picked wouldn't matter. Just about every encounter with a food truck had equally long lines.

Haruichi contemplated on the thought, but doesn't say anything when he spots a certain friend of theirs in line at one of the sushi stands. "Or we can have what Furuya-kun is having" the pinklet claims, grabbing Sawamura's hand and dragging him over to tall, noticeable figure. When they both came up to the latter, Furuya looks down at them with a look that didn't seem so surprised but had his voice slightly lighter than normally. "Hey, guys" he greets them, his tone returning to it's normal cadence.

"Hey, Furuya-kun, mind if we wait in line with you?" Haruichi asked, batting his lashes through the slits of his hair. The stoic male wasn't opposed to the idea since he knew all other lines were long, and he was only four customers away from ordering. Furuya takes a step to the side, allowing Haruichi and Sawamura in line.

"Thanks, Furuya-kun!" Haruichi exclaims gratefully.

Furuya only shakes his head as he stared over at Haruichi. His eyes gradually fell to the features belonging to the brunette, and then to the linked hands that laid down at each of their sides.

Sawamura catches the look, but Furuya didn't seem to notice him staring. Before he was caught, Sawamura looks away through the crowd, slyly peeling his hand out of Haruichi's grasped.

He pockets his hands away in the front of his jeans, staring down at his feet to not catch Haruichi's gaze.

Luckily Haruichi doesn't press any questions onto him, and starts a friendly conversation with Furuya in the meantime. They sounded as if they had a lot to catch up on; Sawamura wondered how
the two had been up to lately. But just as stated earlier: like he ever had the time to ask.

Sawamura's eyes lit up when he finds Miyuki walking through the rowdy crowd with his own tray of food in hand. This had been the first time since the start of the event he has seen Miyuki, and in a long time at that. They hadn't really conversed at all since getting to the dorms late after taking a stroll through hells' tears.

They had a few contestations where the friction between them only proliferated. If he had been trying to push him away, then he was doing a good job. But as of now, through all the anguish stockpiling itself on Sawamura, the little quarrel about who apologizes first was purporting nothing but pettiness.

That and Miyuki had a resource at the moment that he did not: food. All the more reason to reconcile and establish good relations.

With the next event starting in forty-five minutes, reconciling their differences now seemed like a good deal. "I'll be right back guys," Sawamura says promptly. He hadn't given it another second to hear a reply before he was already walking away. He had been trying not to walk too fast in the event he bumped into someone and stirred unwanted attention, but he also didn't want Miyuki leaving his sight when he had just spotted him for the first time in a while.

Sawamura says his excuses as he squishes through groups of people, racing against Miyuki's gradual pace to catch him. His eyes flew around, making out every face of every person he passed. He didn't know why he was in a hurry to see Miyuki. It could be that he made his mind up and decided to apologize first—Sawamura really didn't know.

But knowing he would see Miyuki had him a bit too excited then necessary. And that was only because he had food. The atrocities of his dream from last night wouldn't veer him away from taking a good opportunity.

However...

"Gah--!" Sawamura clung to his throat from the pull of his collar being roughly jerked back, ramming into something remotely concrete. Or at least that's what it felt like. Sawamura lurched around at the figure with glowering eyes, cheeks inflated with an evident anger.

But whatever animosity he had boiling inside him begging to be released had diminished in an instant at the sight of Miyuki's inscrutable face. A hand of his still at his collar and the other holding onto his tray of food.

Any words that Sawamura prepared beforehand dissipated, leaving him a stuttering mess as he fishes for anything to say at the moment. His eyes drastically flew around for a distraction to reel away Miyuki's intense glare. For the most part he hoped for the latter to simply let go of him.

Through the clustered noises of shouts and idle chatter, Miyuki says, "Were you following me?" with a piercing edge at his voice that made him sound even more malevolent.

Sawamura slapped a hand over his mouth to contain whatever nonsense was about to shuffle out. His cheeks flushed a light red, and it didn't help that the sun was adding on to the burning sensation picking at the side of his face.

"W-What are you talking about?" Sawamura sputtered out finally after a good minute passed over. He slyly tries to pull himself away from Miyuki's hold, but the older brunette's grip is firm, and when he realizes what Sawamura was doing he pulls him closer. "I-I was just trying to find what food line
to stand in!" He defends himself with a hard stare that quickly crumbled.

Miyuki clicks his tongue in disbelief. "A-And I wanted to...talk with you" Sawamura makes a face when he says this.

That made some color rush to Miyuki’s face. He didn't seem opposed to pushing Sawamura away whether he was heat exhausted or not, and he also doesn't protest to the first year following him to a rather isolated area on the bleachers where Sawamura could have guessed he was sitting the whole time. It had been a shaded area on the top row of the bleachers. Free of any big cliques that would have shot Sawamura down with one glance.

The two take their seats next to each other. Sawamura had been a bit hesitant to do so since he knew Miyuki didn't really have that sort of appeal for them to even be that close. Maybe now had been an exception, but still.

Involuntarily, his eyes dip to the tray Miyuki placed on his lap. Sawamura knew a homemade cuisine when he saw one. That, and his personalized food container gave it away. The cuisine consisted of steamed white rice, futomaki, ehömaki, fried fish, and yakitori. It was a mix of many that Sawamura felt a pool form in his mouth. He mentally cursed himself for not buying anything before going off to get Miyuki.

Wasn't the only foolish choice he regrets.

"What is it you want to talk about?" Miyuki gets straight to the point dryly. He pulls open a pair of chopsticks and grabs at the swarm of rice packed opulently on top of each other. When he glances over at Sawamura, the first years' eyes dart up, and a faint smile breaks his face swiftly.

"I-I was just...t-thinking..." Sawamura fumbles over his words. Instantly, he plays with his fingers to put him at ease, but feeling Miyuki’s hard gaze burn holes at his neck wasn't helping. "...about the whole rain situation. I'm really sorry for not thinking about the time a-and us getting left to stay and chat with a friend of mine a-and--" Sawamura is cut off when his stomach loudly interrupts him. His body runs stiff, and heat crawls to the back of his neck, scorching from there onto his face.

Miyuki didn't think he could see a person turn red as fast as Sawamura did, and he was quite amused. When a chuckle slips out his mouth Sawamura's eyes dart over to meet with those fiery amber ones, and he swears he wants to punch that smile off his face if he didn't feel like stone at the moment. "D-Don't lau--"

"--here" Miyuki picks up a futomaki roll as an offering. He shoves it over in Sawamura's direction, waiting expectantly for him to accept.

Baffled, a deeper shade of red dominates the first year's face. "I-I can't, that food is for you, plus you already ate from the sticks" he comes up with any excuse to decline. Even if the reason he had come over was primarily for the food.

"And you would rather wait in those long lines to get one of your own?" Miyuki arched a brow at Sawamura.

"I would," Sawamura stands up from his spot.

Miyuki rolls his eyes. "Sit your ass back down and take it before I change my mind and let you starve" he threatens. Sawamura takes his seat back beside Miyuki and chewed at the bottom of his lip, contemplating hard over the idea. He knew on a few occasions Miyuki had barged his space during lunch to eat whatever he had and that in this situation should be compensation. But other
thoughts were running through his mind if he were to accept.

Besides, Miyuki was conniving. Who knew what he was thinking if Sawamura even ogled his food without being punished severely.

"D-Do you mind--?"

"Take it or I will eat it" Miyuki emphasised his insistence with a hint of agitation.

Without hesitating this time, Sawamura leans in and takes the futomaki roll in his mouth. Miyuki watched as Sawamura's lips wrapped tenderly around the chopsticks.

A peculiar feeling that erupts in Miyuki's chest sickens him. Just when Sawamura glanced up at him Miyuki had looked away and attempted to pull the chopsticks back. "Don't eat the chopsticks while you're at it," he retorts bitterly. "I only have one of them" a dirty glare to him.

Sawamura tries to not reply with anything that will have the food from his mouth falling. He only hits Miyuki at his arm and chews slowly at the food. From the ephemeral belligerence he held for the catcher, Sawamura almost missed how good the food tasted in his mouth. It was too good. And familiar.

"Wow, it's good, did your mom make this for you?" Sawamura batted his eyes at him as he gazed at the futomaki piece he was deciding on letting Miyuki get for him next.

Sawamura notices the slight pause in Miyuki's movements and how tense his shoulders his got. "Oh no...did I pick a sensitive topic?" Sawamura hoped he didn't. He originally came here for them to make up, not worsen their relationship.

"S-Sorry, Miyuki, I didn't mean to--"

"Don't worry about it," Miyuki pushed back whatever despair had been itching at his throat to come out. He picks up some rice and thrust the contents down his throat.

"Here, want another one?" Miyuki asked, picking up the piece Sawamura had been deviously ogling. Diffidently, Sawamura shakes his head and scoots closer to Miyuki, parting his lips to take in the food.

Sawamura chews at the food, savoring the taste of what was like the best food in the world as of now.

Miyuki could see he was enjoying the food and smiled fondly at him.

"Do you like it?" Miyuki grinned sheepishly, failing to stop himself from staring at Sawamura's lips. The latter didn't seem to notice though.

"I love it! It's good. Do you mind if I get more?" Sawamura's supplicating eyes aiming to lure him in. Miyuki wouldn't admit that the little trick had worked. He only gives a short nod and then rips off a piece of fried fish and beckons for Sawamura to get the first bite.

By then the two had been touching each other side by side, though none of them took notice. They both had enjoyed sharing the food Miyuki had. Sawamura never missed the opportunity to make an honest comment. It took about seven minutes for them to finish altogether. *Heaven in my mouth*, Sawamura thought for it to be.

Miyuki could tell Sawamura was devastated when the container went empty. Poor guy seemed like
the world was going to end at any minute.

"Tch, you look like a lost puppy" Miyuki snorted as he closed his container and pushed it into his bag. He seemed to be rummaging for something else.

Sawamura slumped back in his seat, taken aback from the irony. "The real Miyuki doesn't care...not about me or anything concerning me" Sawamura's chest swelled at the remembrance. He had no clue why now of all time he has to think about that horrid dream; why it had to be Miyuki to face him and be the person he openly admits his low profile to. To him, it was very belittling.

The air in his throat clings to him for life, nothing daring to come in or out. Thinking about that dream--why *him?* Why *now?!*

It felt like his heart was being squeezed, every drop of blood leaving his system and never wanting to come back. Sawamura, like always, felt weak. And in this sense it wasn't a good thing.

Then the moment Miyuki turns back around air enters through their designated pipes, and his lungs expand with greed for oxygen. Sawamura tries to not make it noticeable that he had trouble breathing, and dear god prays it's not written over his face.

Thankfully, Miyuki doesn't say anything about it. "I got chinese styled dumplings, want to try some?" He peels off the container to show Sawamura. However, Sawamura didn't exactly feel in the need for anything else. The food he presented earlier felt like enough for the day.

But those words never cross over to Miyuki. Not when a third figure enters their party.

"Eijun"

Sawamura's eyes constrict at the mention of his first name. Generally, it wouldn't concern him who used his name. But it was the fact that he was looking right at Miyuki and the catcher hadn't said a peep, nor did he recognize any of his friends to have that specific timbre. He had only hope it was just his imagination. But after he heard his name be called for the second time he knew he was not making it up. Sawamura could also tell Miyuki was hearing the voice.

Bracing himself, Sawamura whisked around and cracked an innocent smile at the buff male that stood behind him, eyes fauxing the same innocence Sawamura plastered, all for the sake of Miyuki not catching on.

"Yes, Daichi?" Sawamura pushed all fear and worry out of his tone to sound sweet and surprised.

"Can we go somewhere *alone* for a minute? I have something to tell you" Daichi says almost as if he was some lovestruck emo pouring his heart out for the first time. It made Sawamura's stomach churn. The only word he heard from Daichi's mouth was 'alone,' and who knew what Daichi meant by him having something to tell him.

Trying to compose himself, Sawamura turns to Miyuki with a small smile. "I'll be back, okay?." *Hopefully.*

Miyuki weakly smiles back. "Okay, I'll be here as before" he says back.

Sawamura mentally screamed at Miyuki. He had wished for the catcher to spring in and save him, protest and tell for them that they had whatever secret plans made and go out. Anyone *but* Daichi.

Sawamura takes the hand that Daichi offers, and tries to not cringe when the taller male gives it a gentle squeeze. He turns to face Miyuki, who was now on his phone. He seemed disappointed,
almost as if he was sad that he had to leave.

If it had been him, Sawamura would have been the same. But if he was aware of what went on while he was alone with Daichi, he knew Miyuki would rather be called lucky to sit there being on his phone, free of zero clutches.

Automatically, Sawamura knew he was dead. Daichi told him countless of times to stay put, and veer himself out the way of guys who he was attached to. But Sawamura wasn't attached to Miyuki like that, Daichi knew that right? There were many things about them that made them incompatible with each other, so there was no need to be jealous...right?

Something told Sawamura that was false. Daichi had been tugging on him hard, and he had been storming through the crowd quite roughly and quickly. But all while not making it obvious that he was angry and was most likely going to skin him alive with his raging torment once they got into an isolated bathroom or closet.

Or maybe he does have something to tell him.

Sawamura was almost surprised when he saw they were heading back on campus. Asking why was the dumb question. Sawamura could probably take an easy guess. It was a clear area away from the whole general body. The school itself was isolated, free of whatever teachers or administrators that couldn't make it to the all day event.

If Daichi was talking about settling a few things, anywhere in the school would be a perfect opportunity while everyone was distracted.

"You're not in trouble, if that's what you're thinking" Daichi's voice startled Sawamura out of his daze. Knowing Daichi, taking him up on that wasn't a bright idea. He was the one to wreck a person's dreams the moment they realized they had any.

Daichi could also be the reason a person might have trust issues.

"Believe me, we are only going to talk. No bruises" Daichi looks back at Sawamura to ensure he heard him. The brunette shook his head at him, telling him he understood.

The rest of the trip was quiet. Sawamura never anticipated where they were heading. But of course, it didn't matter.

Once Daichi found an empty classroom that was open, he dragged Sawamura inside and closed them in.

Sawamura stood around scrutinizing the room, taking in the structure. He knew this room to belong to their first period.

"What did you want to talk about?" Sawamura asked almost quietly, facing Daichi who had now creeped up close to him that their faces were inches apart. He swallowed hard on a lump forming in his throat, tempting to not step back.

Daichi pulls out a hand and drags it down his cheek. He grins when Sawamura flinches, but fakes a smile that makes Daichi's stomach almost coil into itself.

"I want to talk about us" Daichi says sternly, arms folded over his burly chest. In his hardcore gaze Sawamura could tell he was telling the truth. Whenever it came to him things got intense.

"U-Us?" Sawamura didn't mean to repeat, but his choice in topic was a bit baffling. Us, what did
that even mean? Sawamura couldn't help but wonder. Referring to them as 'us,' Sawamura could only picture more gruesome beatings and torture.

This had to be about him eating with Miyuki. That had to be for sure. They never really talked legitimately till now. When it came down to down the only concept to Sawamura's conclusion was Daichi's perfectly hidden fury towards the kind gesture Miyuki offered. How much of it he had seen was beyond Sawamura's thinking capabilities.

Shit, now that pinge of regret began pooling in his chest. Even if Daichi contended no physical warfare, Sawamura knew his mind could change as quick as a blink of an eye could go.

"Yes," Daichi says, his voice thick with a sudden coldness. His eyes transfixed on the smaller brunette that had now been fidgeting in place, undoubtedly febrile.

The tension in the air increased tenfold. Any small movements Daichi made had Sawamura's break kicking itself back into his lungs. His heart beating too rapidly against his ribs to not be heard.

"I want to be in an exclusive relationship with you."

At the mention, Sawamura felt his heart cool to a stop and his blood run ease through his veins. "W-What?" Sawamura bemused.

He wasn't exactly sure if he had heard Daichi correctly; mostly he could hardly believe what this contentious bastard said. Being in an exclusive relationship, he was out of his damn mind. The way he treats Sawamura was an atrocity; a malfeasance to him.

And the very words he had said to him was wanting to be in a 'exclusive relationship?'

Looking over his still austere facade, Sawamura could tell he was serious. Daichi was serious from the moment he asked for them to be alone just to talk. But still puzzled, Sawamura had been trying to cap why. Why did he was this with him of any other guy or girl in the school?

Sawamura felt like he had been completely run over. He was perplexed. In a wave of turmoil. Being understanding and acknowledging what Daichi felt towards him was a mere offense and basically a sign of him giving into a life of oppression.

"Y-You're joking, right?" Sawamura tried to not maniacally laugh about it. "Y-You have to be" A forced smile attempts to wreck one of Daichi's own in hopes of this all draining over to be prank, and that what he had wanted was just some stunt to pull his leg.

But no smile sported, and no ounce of joking in his face came about. Realizing that had Sawamura's body trembling with dread. In denial, Sawamura slowly shook his head from side to side and took a steady step back.

"N-No...t-this has to be--" the mere thought of being with Daichi was horrific; a nightmare coming to life. If he had to be honest Sawamura would rather prefer the non-consensual sexual harassment and beatings where no one knew about them whatsoever; that they were mere strangers.

But to be forced to love someone who does that and display their affection for one another while public had been more infuriating. Sawamura didn't want that but who was he to object whatever choice Daichi made. He would be thankful for a free day of being battered like a caged animal if anything.

"Do you not want that? I think we're quite compatible" Daichi says almost as if that was a joke. A formidable smirk now tracing those acidic thin lips of his as he inches closer to Sawamura, dragging
a hand down over the latter's features. Daichi pinches a lock of hair between his fingers, enjoying the silky feeling of the hair twisting up together.

If he hadn't been too close to be able to hit him Sawamura would have scoffed visibly. But the flinch in his posture had been enough.

With no words to hear from the first year, Daichi continued.

"Trust me, my reasons are fully reasonable. Trying to score some points with your little baseball buddy or your brother or that pink haired idiot are all out the picture" Daichi spoke with indignation when he refers to Sawamura's friends. "And that Sanada guy you mentioned; all four of them. They aren't good for you, none of them. And if you dare pull some stupid shit and I found out I'll hurt them"

Daichi laughed menacingly at the way Sawamura's face contorts down the border line of fear and disbelief. No doubt he knew Daichi was capable of doing what he says. The guy had been tugging him around with an invisible leash nearly since the beginning of the school year and no one suspected a thing yet.

Being able to take them four down was nothing close to a challenge.

"Do we understand?" He says tactfully, doing what he does best when it came to associating agreements with the one person he truly loved being around.

Sawamura could barely say a word, or even lift a finger. The mere thought of Daichi laying a hand on either of them made his heart ache with so much pain. It was suffocating. Even if he hadn't like Miyuki, even seeing him suffer brought hum distraught.

Another delimma he found himself being in. Sawamura prayed that the guys understand his intentions when he chooses his decision, not that there was one for to correctly choose. He had no say in anything that ascends between them. Sawamura just had to accept.

In exchange for them to not get hurt, Sawamura looks Daichi in the eyes with boiling resentment. "Fine" he says through gritted teeth.

The moment Sawamura was dragged outside back into the crowd of Seidou students, the two played an act that fooled just about everyone they came in contact with.

To Sawamura's dismay, and a hard stare from Daichi to accept it, they had been holding hands. It came as no surprise that Daichi had been exceptionally popular. There had been more to him than some ruthless bastard that skipped class despite having good grades and lounging around any corner to take any girl he saw to his liking. Except he didn't treat no one else like the way he does Sawamura.

So when they passed about every big group of students they rewarded them with supportive grins and high fives. No conversation carried over, only comments that had Daichi light on air and Sawamura postponing regurgitation.

Only when they came to a prominent group of guys had Daichi stopped them to introduce Sawamura to them.

"Hey guys, this is my boyfriend Sawamura Eijun, he wanted to meet you guys" Daichi spoke that
husky but friendly voice of his. A tone he had been quite comfortable with sharing between the guys.

Some guys surveyed Sawamura up and down, a smirk draping their lips while a good two others only shook their heads. "I thought you were straight though" a tan skinned five foot ten guy asked, muscles breaking out of his uniform and messy black hair flying through the wind.

The other male giving the same expression nodded. "We only ever see you with girls. You're bi now?"

"Is it a problem?" Daichi's voice turned a troublesome coldness that had the two almost pissing their pants. "N-Not at all" The guy from before laughs.

"I don't see a problem" One blonde haired guy said unprovoked. "Your little Eijun is kind of cute. Perfect match" He winks at Eijun.

Defensively, Daichi tugs Sawamura behind him. "Keep your dick in another woman's asshole, Toumra" he ridicules with the bitterness in his cadence escalating to an all time high.

"Right, I'll do that" The blonde, known as Toumra, wickedly grins.

At the same time Daichi had been introducing his friends to Sawamura, Miyuki had been walking with Kuramochi to head to the locker room in preparation of the second relay of the day that had been delayed with that of other small activities.

After he had been left alone Kuramochi showed up coincidentally a good few minutes later with his tray of food half gone. At the suggestion of preparing with Tetsu and Tanba for the 4x400 relay, Miyuki thought it would be a good idea since after the break they were an event away from playing.

By the time Kuramochi had finished his food he had taken the container of dumplings Miyuki specifically took out to share with Sawamura only. Not that it mattered. After a good ten minutes passed and Miyuki had been certain that he was ditched, giving his food up to Kuramochi was his least amount of worries.

"Honestly, Miyuki" Kuramochi gushed, smacking loudly at the mouth-watering taste of the chinese styled dumplings.

Facing Miyuki, who had been avoiding all ability to get touched or pushed into another by the wave of the crowd, Kuramochi chugs down the last bit of food in his mouth and says, "your cooking only seems to get better, wanna be my servant from now on?" The shortstop pressed the ends of the second pair of chopstick he found in Miyuki's bag with that impish grin of his.

Miyuki scowls at the green haired male. "Serving a nuisance who is of no high authority? Who do you take me for to be calling me a servant. If anything your kind should be serving me" he clicks his tongue mockingly at the latter.

"You're so cynical" Kuramochi quips. "I only asked for you to cook for me, not to parade on Cheetahs versus Tanuki's" he stuck his tongue out.

"Get your own food like them then, you'll fit right in. Trust me, not even coach would notice your disappearance" he grins at the possibility.

"Living in the wild?" Kuramochi ponders the thought as he stuffs his mouth with another dumpling. Miyuki rolls his eyes at his ill behaviour to even attempt to talk with his mouth full. "I've been told to be a pretty wild person" he sniggers cunningly.
"Did your Ryou-san tell you that?" Miyuki joked.

Kuramochi was in the mist of coming up with a retort, because honestly who did Miyuki think he was to always bring one of his major weaknesses into an argument just to win, but his eyes had caught something far more interesting that would surely have Miyuki feeling some type of way.

"Isn't that Bakamura with Daichi?" Kuramochi wheezed out a laugh as he came to a stop a great distance from the two to not be seen. It took a few seconds for Miyuki to process, who stopped a few feet ahead of the shortstop and took a glance at him only to see Kuramochi still staring at the two.

With a sudden urge to now look over, Miyuki turns his view to see exactly what Kuramochi was seeing. Factually, Sawamura had been standing next to Daichi, both of them chatting together with the group of guys they assembled with.

A peculiar feeling lodged itself in Miyuki's chest when his eyes fell down to their linked hands. "What went on while they were alone?" Miyuki couldn't help but wonder. For them to come out looking serene as if they had been free of any chains, and to be holding hands, something definitely went on.

Miyuki tried not to overthink anything. But that ecstatic grin pasting Sawamura's face and jumping about with some guy in blonde hair as if they were having a memorable argument, and Daichi watching as if he had made the right choice; the prominent catcher couldn't be any more infuriated. It took a lot to not show it.

"By the way," Kuramochi nearly startled Miyuki out of his deep trance. He looks up at the pretty boy catcher, almost enjoying the look he was trying hard to not muster. "Didn't you and Daichi go to school until junior high ended? Why don't you guys talk anymore" Kuramochi asked with a perched brow.

No one in Seidou had really known that the two use to talk other than Kuramochi, but that was all he knew. It was only last year Miyuki thought he was free when he came to Seidou. Only that year he had gain the strength to tell Daichi to back off from him, to leave him alone and to screw himself. But Sawamura was a different topic. Both of them had equally kept their on him but in different ways.

Ever since elementary.

Daichi was a sick person. And Miyuki despised him wholly.

"People change" Miyuki could only say as he stared hardly at the those linked hands. It suddenly became hard to breathe when he had been so focused on the intimate gesture. Maybe it didn't mean anything, but what did he know.

"Let's get ready so we can warm up, and stop eating those damn dumplings or you'll cramp up" Miyuki snapped as he stormed off in a much longer direction to get to the locker room; anything to not see up close the definition of displeasure.

"Tch," Kuramochi smirked gravelly.

"What's the matter, Ei, you barely touched your food..."
Sawamura flinched in spot, eyes more fixated on the plate of untouched udon noodles than anything else. He hadn't mean to seem so out of range, and originally that was the plan: to show up unbothered and go through a good two hours of friendly conversations.

Obviously that hadn't been working out. Sawamura's mind was hazed with so many thoughts to even comprehend what the other male was even saying. It was like his words were lacing together, making him sound too incoherent to keep up.

And he hadn't done it purposely. Sawamura saw no intention to.

"N-Nothing is wrong with me, Sanada, honest" Sawamura stammers over his words. Sanada could tell, as he leaned further onto the table, that the latter had no intention to be as subtle to hide the fact that he was upset. It was written all over his face that something was on his mind.

"Ei, I know when you're lying" Sanada chuckle with amusement, resting his chin on the palm of his hand. Sawamura's face bloomed red. Even if they haven't been together for a while, or known each other as long as they should have, Sanada knew a lot about Sawamura. It made getting away with things a bit harder when in face with the second year.

Only him. Tch, how bothering.

Though Sawamura didn't entirely hate that characteristic of his. Besides the others he has completely fooled today, Sanada figured him out like a card.

What else could he know about Sawamura?

"What's wrong? I didn't beg you to meet up with me just to see you mope the whole time" the worriment in his tone was there. Somehow, it was relieving to hear.

It's been a while since someone even bothered checking up on him that Sawamura almost forgot what other people being worried for him sounded like.

A half-hearted smile wrecks his lips. "S-Sorry, but do you honestly want to spend time just wondering?" Sawamura asked in a gentle manner.

Sanada didn't think long and hard about it. There was nothing he would lose just from talking with Sawamura. He only enjoyed doing just that; spending time with him.

"Wouldn't sadden me, Ei. As long as I get to hear your wonderful voice" Sanada grins endearingly.

Sawamura's heart began to palpitate. Heat pricked at his face from the sudden compliment. He tried to not get too excited though. His purpose for being here was not exactly to catch up like how Sanada thought it would be.

Daichi was watching him everywhere he went. Even if he was being watched now at least whoever was watching would know. Sawamura didn't want to risk Sanada's life over his. Even now the Yakushi pitcher meant so much to him.

But ending things weren't as easy as it seemed. Sanada was a nice guy that didn't deserve this kind of treatment. It was for the better though, and hopefully when the time came Sanada would understand.

"It's not that easy Sana--"

"Trust me, Ei. I'll still be here no matter what" Sanada assures the brunette, fanning away whatever worries would wrecken him.
Sawamura's face twist with uncertainty. Averting his eyes, Sawamura gazed worriedly out the window of the bakery they sat in. The smell of brewed coffee and pastries clashing in his nostrils making him sick to his stomach.

This was difficult. Sanada sounded very understanding. Leaving him would definitely break his heart.

"Look, Eijun, I know whatever you're going through must be tough for you to not want to say, but if staying quiet is the right choice for you then I will support you. I just hate to see you sad, that look doesn't suit someone like you. I miss my exuberant, hyper Ei" Sanada spoke gently when he says this, gray eyes transfixed on Sawamura's own big golden ones. Beautiful orbs.

A pool of warmth encircles Sawamura's stomach. That ginger smile of his having some effect on Sanada. "I-I'm glad you don't want me being sad...but San--"

"Hold up, before you say anything I want to give youb something."

Sawamura blinks skeptically, waiting for another reply.

"I wasn't sure that if you showed up whether you would be mad at me or not. After what happened back at the stadium I wouldn't blame you if you wanted to stay away from me for a while..." Melancholy creeped in his tone. The desperation of having Sawamura actually do that pained Sanada, but he tried to not seem as condemned, even if the incident back then hadn't been his fault.

"Y-You didn't do anything though..." Sawamura shrills, voice fading when Sanada's eyes reflected something similiar to pain.

"How should I know?" He tries to laugh away the dismay. "You haven't texted me ever since."

Fuck, way to make a guy feel remorse. If they were there to make amends and get back on the path they had once been heading together, why, to Sawamura, did he feel like he was being attacked today?

The guilt penetrating his skin worsened with Sanada staring back at him with solemn eyes, and Sawamura holding the gaze.

"I-I'm sorry Sanada, really, I would never hurt a friend as amazing as you," Sawamura's voice cracked. To hide his embarrassment Sawamura's eye hovered back to his plate, teeth baring his lips and nails digging beneath his skin. "Your the only one I know so far that is here for me."

"What about Miyuki?" Sanada sucked in a steady breath.

Sawamura shrugged unknowingly. Daichi told him to stay away from Haruichi, Kuramochi, Sanada and Miyuki. Maybe he could use that as some excuse for them to not have anything going on between them. Not that Sanada would find out anyway.

"I-I'm kind of avoiding him" Sawamura mumbles audible enough for Sanada to make out.

Looking up, Sawamura watched as Sanada's brows knit together with anger skyrocketing. His small creases binding and his knuckles clung together on the table whitening. "What did he do to you? Did he do something?" He tried to not sound mad. It was cute to see the jealous side of him. Sanada got overprotective real quickly.

"No...I just have my reasons" Sawamura grinned cutely.
"G-Good" Sanada blushed. "I didn't need him breaking my gift for you if he got any ideas, not that they could be futuristic possibilities" he faintly laughs as he pulls out a small bag from underneath the table.

Sawamura frowned. If he knew they were going to be getting back to good terms like this then he wish he would have gotten something for Sanada as well. "Y-You didn't have to get me anything, dammit, Sanada. I didn't get you anything, why do you have to be too much of a good friend" the brunette barked vigorously.

Sanada laughs more louder. "I just care, Ei. Doesn't matter" he hums rhythmically as he hands the bag over to Sawamura for him to open.

To get the tension over with, Sawamura takes the bag, and too subconscious to look up at Sanada's expectant gaze, he goes through the bag and pulls out the items inside.

They had been Yakushi merchandise. A black and white striped shirt with Sanada's name overlapped on the top back, a hat similiar to his, and a small box and a card.

Sawamura opens the box first, overwhelmed. He didn't know what to expect since small boxes were commonly used to propose. But when he opens the box he is not met with a million dollar diamond ring dug up from the deepest level of some gold mine. Instead, it had been a golden wristlet with many charms on it. One of them that has captivated Sawamura was the dog. Despite the gift being a bit colloquial and cliche, it was indisputably considerate of him.

He hadn't known it, but Sawamura was a steaming tomato at the moment. He had been ogling the gifts for so long that it gave Sanada time to pull his phone out and take a picture of his awestruck expression.

"So I take it you like the gifts?" Sanada broke Sawamura out of his little daze. Blushing, Sawamura shakes his head, too flustered to speak.

"Want me to help you put the wristlet on?" Sanada offered with a kind smile.

"Please?" Sawamura hands him the golden material and gives his hand to the jet haired male, watching as Sanada concentrated on locking the hatch over his wrist. The scene stupefies Sawamura, who couldn't look away from Sanada's face, completely mesmerized.

At the moment, it felt like time ceased. To him, it looked like a scene right out of a Cinderella movie. Only thing different is that they were both guys.

Sawamura had no idea what it was with guys being so involved with him. Even if he hadn't admitted to liking the attention, Sawamura undoubtedly enjoyed moments like this one.

"There" Sanada admired the wristlet that perfectly fitted around Sawamura's arm. The little charms that dangled along with it made it seem even more enchanting. "Looks beautiful on you."

Sawamura couldn't help the burning sensation enflaming his cheeks. Sanada didn't have to try that hard to get him like that. "Looks nice...I love it, Sanada" Sawamura took in the view of the wrislet on him. Perfect.

"Sorry if it's a bit selfish of me, but I like to mark what is mine" Sanada spoke without shame, a crooked smile sketching his lips that made Sawamura's heart flop.

"Y-You're so cheesy" Sawamura mutters with a small grin before his eyes fluttered to meet with Sanada's. "It's the truth, now, let me see your hand so I can take a picture of it and show Raichi. He
helped me get all this set."

"Ah, sure" Sawamura gives him his hand.

Sanada pressed his fingers at Sawamura's soft palm, capturing how well his fingers fit into his. Sawamura could see Sanada was trying not to seem greedy by grabbing the whole of his hand as he went through his phone to get to his camera. Grinning, Sawamura took Sanada's hand into his, giving it a small squeeze before Sanada could take a picture.

To his surprise, Sanada stiffened, and looked up to see Sawamura grinning right back at him.

"Why the look? I'm yours aren't I?" Sawamura teased.

Even if it was a joke, Sanada had the hugest grin plastered on his face.

"The one and only" he squeezed his hand back with just as much passion.

End Notes

Trust me the story will get better as it progress. Hope you guys enjoyed!!

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