What Happened to Pluto?

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Summary

When Bokuto was 7, they taught him there were nine planets. When he was 8, they taught him there were eight planets. And he never got over it.

Notes

I used to be in the Pluto faction until a really smart high school classmate explained why it wasn't a planet anymore.

But, in researching for this fic, I found out there are some interesting criticisms of the definition that eliminated Pluto...but that's neither here nor there!

See the end of the work for more notes.

Midterms.

They were fast approaching, and the Fukurodani volleyball club had curtailed practice for some intensive study sessions at club members’ houses. Tonight they were at Akaashi’s. With Konoha and Komi poring through textbooks, Bokuto struggled with mock essays for the exam he was most likely to struggle in: Japanese. Nearby, Akaashi was tutoring his junior Anahori for his science test.

“All right, now list the eight planets,” Akaashi commanded.

“Nine,” Bokuto whispered without glancing up from what he was writing. Neither of the setters seemed to notice.

Bokuto set his pencil down. “And Pluto.”

“Huh?” Anahori peered, finally taking note of the ace. Akaashi swiveled around.

“Pluto’s not a planet anymore.”

“You take that back!” spat Koutarou aggressively, drawing Konoha and Komi from their math prep.

Anahori’s head tilted. “What’s Pluto?”

Bokuto looked more devastated than if he missed a cross.

“How dare you!” Koutarou roared, practically clambering over his desk to strangle the young setter. “Pluto is the ninth planet! But some jerks said he didn’t deserve of our love, so they kicked him out!”

Konoha perked up. “Oh, yeah. I remember Pluton.”

“Pluto!”

Akaashi, who in a state of boredom had studied the Wikipedia article on the matter, was quick to set the record straight. “The IAU defined the term planet and found only eight in the Solar System meeting the criteria.”

“Oh, yeah? How would you like it if you were the ninth best volleyball player in Japan, and all of a sudden they told you, ‘From now on, we’re only going to track the Top 8’?!”

“The alternative,” Akaashi calmly replied, “would be to say we found a player better than you, so you’re actually only tenth best.’”

“You just have to make things worse for him, don’t you!!” Kou screeched.

Anahori, who started school after Pluto’s primordial plutoing gawped with perplexity.

“Since when did Pluto become a ‘he’?” Haruki whispered to Akinori who shook his head in confusion.

“Pluto still retains the status of dwarf planet,” Akaashi coolly pushed.

“Oh? So size matters now?! Tell that to Hinata! Or Komi!”

The libero jolted.

“That’s not what I said,” Keiji protested. But Bokuto in utter fury was shoving his things into his backpack and slung it over his shoulder. He stormed towards the exit of the room.

“Where are you going?” Konoha asked.

“Home!” Koutarou spun. “I can’t be around such disrespectful people!” He cast his eyes over the four teammates who were beset by bafflement and embarrassment. Kou banged a fist against his chest with resolve. “Even if the world forgets about Pluto, I will still remember him!” he firmly decreed and then slammed the door in his exit.

Konoha and Komi were in no mental state to just jump back into math. The young setter Shuuichi
blinked, feeling like he had somehow caused Bokuto’s outburst whether he was culpable for it.

Keiji, meanwhile, spun around and pointed to the next paragraph of his kouhai’s study guide.

“Now, for comets….”

A few days passed. So did the midterms. And then everyone returned to practice as usual, making wildly disparate predictions about their impending grades.

The results came in. And everyone either exhaled or banged their heads on their school desks when each test was returned.

And at practice that evening, one strangely tardy person was Bokuto. He eventually clomped in, whistling gently, very much trying to get everyone’s notice. He grinned ephemerally, his eyebrows perked high, and clearly was hiding something behind his back.

“What has you so happy?” Konoha called.

Bokuto innocently peered. “I got my test back,” he sang and produced his graded Japanese exam from behind his back. “Check it out, hey, hey, hey!”

Akaashi, Konoha, and Komi scuttled over. The score underlined at the top was a 73, a passing grade, but there were more than a few answers marked wrong on the front page.

“I see a lot of Xs,” Akaashi suspiciously observed.

“Yeah, the first half sucked,” Bokuto offhandedly dismissed. He flipped the paper aggressively to the essay at the back. “But look at this! Hey, hey, hey!”

It was a perfect score. Konoha and Komi filled with shock that Bokuto of all people had achieved the feat.

“Full marks?!” Akinori exclaimed.

“Mhm!” Bokuto nodded. “We had to pick a controversy to write about, and I picked why Pluto is a planet!”

A wave of exhaustion fell upon the trio who had completely forgotten about the ordeal a week ago, while Shirofuku, Anahori, and the rest of the team filtered over to see what all the hubbub was.

“And get this,” Bokuto grinned maniacally, “after class, my Japanese teacher pulled me aside, and you know what he said? He said he agreed with me. Pluto never should have been demoted from a planet. You hear that?! The resistance is alive, and we will not rest until Pluto has been restored to his rightful place in the solar system!” He cackled raucously.

All the onlookers not party to the original debate were more than a bit confused, and it was the third-year manager Shirofuku who asked Akaashi the obvious: “Is anyone going to tell him that Pluto still is in the solar system?”

Konoha and Komi reflexively gestured at her. “Shirofuku, please, just don’t.”

End Notes
Let's face it. I still miss Pluto lol.

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