Cafes are places for coffee and awkward conversations with strangers

by LadyWaffles

Summary

Hipster AU dangan ronpa! Ishimaru engages in an unlikely conversation in a very cliché setting.

Ishimaru liked cafés. There was something about that sort of place that always put his mind at ease. The background noises of people chatting and spoon clicking against cups (and occasional hisses from people who sipped at a too hot drink) felt comforting. No wonder he’d stop by one every time he could, pausing to read and order something to warm him in the autumn afternoons. He enjoyed the peace he had there. His looks contrasted highly with his personality and dreams. Some people would give him side glances due to the metal jewelry in his skin, or maybe it was the tattoo? He didn’t mind. As a dedicated college student, he was ready to prove that with hard work, anyone can get anywhere. Regardless of looks or financial condition.

And so there he was. Sitting at his usual spot near the window, book open over the table, sipping carefully at his cup of hot chocolate. He usually didn’t go for anything that wasn’t coffee, but something made him pick that choice anyway. Maybe it was his way of congratulating himself for his achievements, not that he deserved any congratulations.

Ishimaru flipped the page of his book, trying to keep his concentration at the dark ink on the old pages. His table could give him a nice viewing of the street, which now darkened with pouring rain that soaked the unlucky pedestrians that tried their best to not get soaked. Some would get in the cafe for shelter, so, as a consequence, the place was a little bit more crowded than usual.

It didn’t matter. Ishimaru was too busy in his reading to take notice of all that came and went in the cafe, and it honestly didn’t matter. Until he heard a noise near him.

He lifted his eyes from his book and ended up noticing the man sitting in the chair opposite to his at
his table. The man had a strikingly odd hair color and clothes, that somehow went great with his built. Tall and bulky, he rested an arm on the table, the other holding to his own chair, making his pose seem threatening. His violet eyes locked with Ishimaru’s in an intense stare. The student frowned, confused by the man’s sudden wish to just… sit there. The man seemed to realize Ishimaru’s confusion, averting his gaze from him as he clenched his teeth and… blushed? Maybe it was just all the colors in that man that left that impression.

"May I help you?" Ishimaru tried, holding his cup in both hands. The man looked back at Ishimaru, startled.

"What?"

"I said, may I help you?" Ishimaru repeated. The man seemed lost. Glancing around and scratching the back of his head.

"I uhm… I was just…. uhm…" He looked at Ishimaru’s eyes once more, dropping his glance at the book on the table almost instantly. "It’s just the…uuuuuh… The… your BOOK! Yeah, it’s a… nice book. I think. I… actually I haven’t… haven’t read it, uh.” He gulped, resting his hands on his lap and looking away.

Ishimaru raised a brow, tilting his head in confusion. That was… strange.

"Thank you?" Ishimaru said, sounding more like he had asked a question.

"Y-yeah…" The man scratched his head once more. A minute of silence stretched itself between the two men. A minute of heavy, uncomfortable silence. Maybe the man just wanted a place to sit, seeing the cafe was almost full. Maybe he was too embarassed to ask to sit there? How silly.

"You can have that seat if that’s what you wish for. " The student said, gulping his drink.

"Eh? Oh, uhm, that’s… uhm…. Thanks." He coughed.

What an odd man, Ishimaru thought to himself. He considered going back to his book, but found himself uncapable of doing such.

"I’m, uhm, I’m Mondo. Oowada. " A name, hm?

"Oh, nice to meet you, Oowada. I’m Kiyotaka Ishimaru."

"Hm. yeah.. I-I MEAN-! N-nice to meet ya’ too." Oowada half mumbled half grunted. Something about that strange presentation made Ishimaru relax in his seat. Casual conversations were good to him in a way that he’d never know. That is because he’d usually have that kind of conversation, seeing people quickly lost interest in him. Or got too mad or annoyed to stay close to him. Oh no, he was getting upset.

"It’s raining. " Oowada said. He seemed to grimace a few seconds after talking.

"It indeed is. " The student shot a small smile to the man. Who seemed to choke in his own breath for a second. He frowned averting his gaze from the student as a blush appeared in his cheeks ( Yes! It was definitely a blush! Ishimaru was sure now! ).

"It kinda sucks… At least I managed to get shelter to my babe and myself once I got out of work…" Oowada said.

"Your… babe?"

"Uh? Oh, I mean my ride. She’s a dream in two wheels. Could use some upgrades but it’s still pretty amazing. " Oh, a motorcycle. Ishimaru felt relief wash through him. Why was he relieved? Motorcycles were dangerous! It was not because he for a second thought Oowada already had company. Not that it mattered. In fact, Oowada was quite a handsome fella, it would be a miracle for a man such him to be single. Wait, what was he thinking about? How indecent! Oowada was just trying to have a friendly conversation and Ishimaru let his thought wonder like that! He felt ashamed of himself, a lump stuck in his throat.

"I… I see… Y-you said work. What do you work as, Oowada? " Ishimaru tried. Surely that’s how conversations worked.

"Meh, nothing big. I’m a carpenter apprentice. I used to break so much shit as a kid, but I found out that building them is much better." He said, resting his chin in his hand. Ishimaru arched his eyebrows up. That was… that was very nice!

"That is a honorable thing, Oowada! I’m glad that you think that way! "
Oowada snapped his eyes towards Ishimaru turning red once more. It was kinda… cute…
"D-don’t say that. " He stared at the window.
"I mean it though. The world could use more people like you."
"… thanks."
Both man sat in silence (much more comfortable than before) for a few minutes, Oowada staring at
the window and Ishimaru alternating his attention between his drink and the man. That is until he
finished the ( not anymore ) hot chocolate.
"Say Oowada, are you going to drink anything?"
"Hm?" The man turned his attention back at the student. "Oh, nah I’m. I’m not thirsty I jus’ came to
talk to ya’"
"To talk… to me?" Ishimaru felt a strange wave of heat hit his face. Could it really be? Oowada
suddenly straightened himself on his seat looking at Ishimaru with wide eyes.
"SHIT!! I MEAN-!! FUCK !! I J-JUST-!!" He started, catching the attention of a few costumers
nearby. "I-IT’S ‘CAUSE… I’VE SEEN YA’ SITTIN’ HERE BEFORE A-AND YOU JUST
SEEMED NICE A-AND SHIT Y-YOU WERE ALWAYS SITTIN’ ALONE SO I ,UUH, I
THOUGHT THAT MAYBE YOU DIDNT HAVE SOMEONE TO SIT WITH YOU SO I
DECIDED TO TALK TO YOU AND GET TO KNOW YOU? FUCK THAT SOUNDS
CREEPY." His voice shook as he tried(?) to not shout. Oowada had noticed his irrelevant presence!!
And he thought that Ishimaru seemed nice! Ishimaru felt embarrassed but really warm and fuzzy at
the same time.
"T-that’s really kind of you, Oowada!" Ishimaru felt his eyes get teary, uh oh, bad time for crying.
"Uh? S-shit! I’m making you cry! F-fuck ! I’m sorry!! It’s my shouting isn’t it? I swear i-it’s not on
purpose, I get nervous talking to cute people!! FUCK I’M SUCH A CREEP! That’s why I keep
getting rejected damn. S-sorry, I’m just gonna leave." Oowada got up from his sit and starting
making his way… out? Out! Oh no! He was leaving! Bad, bad, bad! Very bad! He quickly made a
plan in his head, getting a paper napkin and a pen out of his pocket, quickly writing something down
before getting his book, leaving a tip and pursuing the man. He and his damn tears!
"W-wait, Oowada, wait!" He caught up with the man outside the cafe, just by the door. The rain had
reduced to almost none, that at least was good.
"Wait! Oowada! Will you please wait a second?" He said in his famous hall monitor tone ( feared
by many middle and high schoolers ). Oowada turned at him, obviously embarrassed and slightly
hesitant.
"You failed to complete your task of ‘getting to know me’ And I believe that if you are determined
to do something, you shouldn’t give up half way!" Ishimaru said in a scolding tone. Oowada gulped
nervously, fidgeting in his feet. Ishimaru swallowed.
"That’s why you should call me and finish that task in a more proper way. " He stretched his arm
towards Oowada, napkin in his hand. Oowada stared at it in awe, then at Ishimaru, before slowly
reaching for it. He stared at it as if it was made of diamonds, looking absolutely baffled. Ishimaru felt
a little proud for getting that reaction. Smooth.
"F-for real?" He asked, clutching at the phone number in his hands as if his life depended on it.
"Yes. But have in mind that I go to college on weekdays’ mornings."
Oowada nodded, mouth still hanging open in disbelief.
"Alright then. It was nice meeting you Oowada. See you again soon. " He bowed his head making
his way home. Oowada waved goodbye in a slow motion keeping his eyes on the boy until he
turned a corner.
The biker stared down at the napkin in his hands once more. He had completely embarrassed himself
in front of a cute boy yet he still gave him his phone number. Holy shit. That had been an adventure.
What were the odds of something like that happening? Nevertheless, he secured the number in his
pants’ pocket and straddled his bike. That was definitely a sign or something. Either the boy really
pitied Mondo, or he was THE ONE.
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