Everyone had a soulmate. And everyone were meant to find their soulmate at some point in their lives. So did Kagami. But not exactly the way he has always imagined.

Notes

So, Jynx here. It's my first fanfic for KnB fandom. Please don't judge too hard.

Inspired by this fantastic idea.

Enjoy!
‘Soulmates, huh.’ Kagami glanced over to a couple sitting on a bench, smiling fondly at each other.

No, there wasn’t anything out of ordinary about them, that one could tell they are soulmates. No Red String attached to their pinkies, no matching or complimentary symbols on their wrists. But they just looked like it. Showering each other with fond gazes and warm smiles.

Humphing at the sight, he teared his eyes away from them and continued making his way down the street.

Everyone had a soulmate. And everyone were meant to find their soulmate at some point in their lives. And when you did find them, your heart would start glowing, radiating warm light.

Or so he has heard anyway.

Kagami would never, never admit that he was elevated by the soulmate thing. He, a 16-year-old teen, nearly two metres tall with a ripped body and overwhelming aura, could never admit that he was an absolute hopeless romantic inside.

When he heard the soulmate story from Alex, when he was still in America in the middle school, he couldn’t help but start thinking about the destined meeting in the future.

Would it be a girl from his class? After school, a heavy rain would rip from the skies, as the two of them would wait by the entrance. Kagami would take out an umbrella and suggest to take her home. She would link her arm around his and, as their eyes locked, their chests would start glowing.

Maybe it would be a cute guy in a coffee shop? Kagami would come to the shop to order his usual cup of coffee. The guy would smile brightly, taking his order and writing his name of the coffee cup. As Kagami would take his cup from the guy, their fingers would brush and suddenly their chests would gleam.

Or maybe it would be a girl-next-door? As Kagami would blare some loud rock music while studying with the window open (let’s be honest, he would probably be procrastinating), the girl next door would get annoyed by the constant noise. She would call him out through her own window (which is conveniently right in front of Kagami’s) and as they start arguing, their chest would emit
the warm light, making the girl blush and quickly hide.

Kagami had thought about countless scenarios, all of them running through his head over and over again like a movie; the fated meeting with his soulmate.

At one point, Kagami even thought that Tatsuya could be his soulmate. He was still carrying that idea somewhere at the back of his head, since neither Tatsuya nor him hadn’t found their soulmates and they knew each other for the longest time.

It frustrated Kagami, that he hadn’t find his supposed other half yet. As far as he knew, it could take years before it happens. Some people even live their lives without meeting theirs — marrying, having families.

Kagami didn’t want that.

Kagami didn’t want to be alone.

Shaking his head, clearing it from uncomfortable thoughts, he glanced at the watch on his wrist and picked up the pace. If he is late for the practice, the coach will have his head and something else from down low for sure.

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“Hell yeah!” Kagami slammed the ball through the hoop mercilessly.

“Kagami-kun,” Kuroko breathed heavily. “please restrain yourself from jumping over my head while dunking. I’m not a hurdle.”

“You popped out of nowhere!!” Kagami waved his hand in front of him. “I had to do it or I would’ve crashed into you!”

“Kagami!” the Captain, cracked his knuckles, coming closer to the pair. “We might have won the Winter Cup, but don’t go doing stupid tricks like that!” Hyūga grabbed him by his head and smiled dangerously. “You might injure someone!”
“F-fine! I won’t d-do it!” Kagami stammered out, as Hyūga’s hold intensified. Kagami wasn’t sure anymore, if only Kyoshi possessed the Vice Claw.

“Alright, let’s end the practice with three sets of warmups and you can go home!” Riko exclaimed and blew the whistle. The guys formed up into a line and started doing the exercises to gradually cool down their bodies.

After finishing up at the gym, which involved cleaning up the court (as the first years always did), Kagami and Kuroko made their way to Maji Burger. It was their routine — Kuroko would order his vanilla shake and Kagami would take 19 burgers for starters.

They sat down at their usual table, Kagami instantly unwrapping one of the burgers and chomping it down in seconds.

“Kuroko, why won’t you eat anything?” Kagami asked, his mouth full of food.

“I’m full by watching you devour that mountain of burgers, Kagami-kun, thank you.” Kuroko said matter-of-factly, taking a sip of his shake afterwards.

“Humph.” Kagami rolled his eyes, taking another untouched burger into his hands. “By the way, Kuroko,” he started. “have you ever thought about meeting your soulmate?”

“Not really. Why?” Kuroko looked at Kagami with a slight gleam of curiosity in his eyes.

“Ah, it’s nothing. Just heard some girls in school talk about it.” he shrugged. “It’s kinda weird, isn’t it? Having a soulmate.”

“I suppose it is. But that is the way things are, Kagami-kun.”

“Yeah, it is.” Kagami swallowed a particularly large piece of food. Kuroko slightly flinched at the sight. That should have hurt. “But it takes time to find your soulmate. It’s kinda unnerving.”
Kagami wasn’t desperate to find his soulmate. He just wanted to find that person quicker than most of the people did. He wanted to have someone he could confide in, talk with for hours, hang out and just feel at peace.

“Is something bothering you, Kagami-kun?” Kuroko looked directly at him. For being such an invisible guy, Kuroko was really sharp. And sometimes it made Kagami feel uncomfortable.

“T-there’s nothing wrong!” Kagami awkwardly laughed, shifting his eyes on the scenery outside. “As I said, some girls were just blabbering about it, that’s all.”

“Whatever you say, Kagami-kun.” Kuroko didn’t seem to be that convinced.

They continued their meal in a silence with occasional commentary from Kuroko about Kagami’s eating habits.

As Kagami returned with another batch of burgers to the table, a particular flamboyant blonde spotted the two of them.

“Kurokocchi! Kagamicchi!” Kise waved at both of them energetically, carrying a vanilla shake and one burger on his tray. “What are you talking about?” the blond put down his food and grabbed a chair from near by.

“Kise-kun, please keep your voice down.” Kuroko scolded his ex-teammate. “Kagami-kun is loud enough without you here.”

“Sorry, Kurokocchi!” Kise let the jab go unnoticed. “So, what were you discussing?” he smiled brightly. “I wanna know everything!”

“Kagami-kun and I were just talking about soulmates, Kise-kun.”

“Ah! I wish I could meet mine quickly.” Kise sighed dreamily. “And I want it to be Kurokocchi!” he launched himself at Kuroko, wrapping his arms around Kuroko’s shoulders.

“No, thank you. You are too much to handle.” Kuroko’s expression hadn’t changed at all. “And you
cannot choose your soulmate, Kise-kun.”

“So mean, Kurokocchi!” Kise rubbed his forehead at Kuroko’s shoulder. “Have you heard of this weird thing about soulmates though?” Kise asked, returning to his seat.

“I’m sure we haven’t Kise-kun.”

“Apparently, each pair of soulmates have their own timing of, y’know, the glowing chest thing.” Kise leaned forward, as if revealing something top secret.

“For example, Kurokocchi and I knew each other from Teikō times, but we hadn’t seen each other chests glow, right?”

“But that doesn’t mean we’re not soulmates! It might be that, if I meet Kurokocchi tomorrow, our chests might start glowing! Isn’t that great!” Kise was bouncing in his seat.

‘So that’s how it is.’ Kagami though, bringing another burger to his mouth. There was a timing, too.

“But it doesn’t take such a long time, as people always say.” Kise continued.

“What do you mean?” Kagami asked, the fact catching his interest.

“I heard from someone, that the average age of meeting your soulmate was around 25. And like the oldest guy, who met his soulmate, was 40 years old, but that was only one case.” Kise shrugged.

“That doesn’t sound as a very reliable fact.” Kuroko sipped on his drink.

“Midorimacchi told me. He knows a lot about soulmates, too. Not only horoscopes are his interests, you know.”

After chatting a bit more, Kagami, Kuroko and Kise went their separate ways.
Kagami felt a bit relieved. So, it didn’t take that long. It’s just several more years at worst. If it was Midorima, who told Kise about it, it must have been true. The guy was spot on when it came to luck.

As he entered his apartment, Kagami quickly changed out of his gakuran and started preparing lunch for tomorrow. His cellphone buzzed on the counter, and Kagami took a quick glance.

From: Ahomine

Text: tomorrow one-on-one. dont be late

Kagami tsk-ed, typing a quick reply.

To: Ahomine

Text: like im ever late idiot

The red head finished packing lunch, grabbed his bag of leftover burgers from Maji and went to the living room, turning on TV, sports channel already on. He made himself comfortable and started watching the match between Bulls and Lakers.

His phone buzzed once more.

From: Ahomine

Text: dont forget my lunch too bakagami

Kagami rolled his eyes and locked his phone, turning his attention back to the TV.
Not As In Description

Chapter Summary

Kagami finally gets what he wanted.

He has never sprinted this fast in his entire life. Even with a lightly twisted ankle. A sports bag slung on his left shoulder, while the hand hold onto the strap for dear life, he dashed 50 miles per hour away from the basketball court.

‘No way in hell,’ Kagami panicked. ‘no way in hell this is happening.’

Twice as quickly, he was back, already at his apartment’s door, shoving a key into the lock. His head was spinning, his heart beat like crazy against the ribcage, the sound reaching all the way up to his head. His hands, shaking close to an eight on a Richter’s scale, were still trying to unlock the door.

‘This is fucking ridiculous!” he kept on panicking in his head. ‘This is a joke, a sick joke.’

The lock finally gave in, and Kagami burst through the door, slamming them hard behind. He made sure to lock the doors firmly, because you never know, who could storm in after him.

As he finally felt safe at the comfort of his own practically empty home, Kagami let the bag slide off his shoulder, sliding down the doors himself, as he clutched his chest tightly.

His eyes closed, the redhead still couldn’t comprehend the reality that hit him in the face just less than 10 minutes ago.

He slowly, almost with caution, opened his yes, looking down to where his hand was gripping. Even through his basketball jersey, he could see a dim light steadily emitting bursts of light, like a soothing lullaby.

“Fuck.” He closed his eyes again, throwing his head back, hitting the door with a dull sound.
Saturday came around quickly enough, as Kagami’s alarm buzzed on his side table. Giving a final stretch, followed by a not-so-sophisticated yawn, the teenager rolled out of bed. Scratching his chest, as if there was an itch he couldn’t get rid of, he made his way out of the bedroom and into the bathroom.

Kagami groggily reached for a toothbrush, putting the toothpaste on, giving less than half of his attention to brushing teeth.

As he looked into the mirror, redhead’s eyes slowly moved from his face all the way down to his chest, as he recalled yesterday’s conversation with Kuroko and Kise.

He really hoped that what Kise said was actually true, and not some kind of trashy teenage magazine column on soulmates (Kise tended to read those a lot).

As he finished brushing teeth, and took a quick shower, Kagami got back to his room. He threw on his favourite Bulls’ jersey (that nicely complemented his hair colour, but he could never admit it out loud) and black basketball shorts. He grabbed his sports bag from under the bed and threw in a basketball shoes, the ones that Aomine gave him, and a towel.

He took the bag with him as he made his way to the kitchen, taking out the already made lunch and putting them into the bag, too. Grabbing his cellphone, wallet and keys, Kagami was out of the apartment, and took a too familiar path to the basketball court at a leisurely pace.

Kagami couldn’t do anything else, but let his mind drift to the though of soulmates. He was in awestruck by the sheer fact that such thing existed. That somehow people were gifted to such an amazing present — to know when they meet their other half that completed them in every way possible.

And what excited and scared the young boy the most, was the absolute spontaneous glow of the soulmates’ chests and the feeling it gives you when it happens.

The fateful moment your soulmate’s and your eyes lock, the time seems to stop. The noises
surrounding you disappear, as if both of you would be separated by an invisible wall from the rest of
the world. Slowly, both of your chests would start pulsing, a dim at first, light, in sync. It would
gradually become brighter, as an indescribable warmth would spread through you, making your heart
beat faster.

He has never seen how they glow, though. He only could imagine from his mother’s stories.

Kagami has heard so much stories, beautiful descriptions of those fateful moments, as he was a child.
His mother and grandmother would tell them before sleep, as enchanting tales of something that, at
that time, seemed surreal.

As he grew older, the topic became almost a taboo for him. Only the girls would gush around,
dreamily talking about their soulmates, making up scenarios in their heads. He didn’t want to come
off as too desperate, so he would keep all his thoughts to himself.

And when he moved back to Japan, the fairytale like aura that surrounded the unexplainable concept,
was gone. Here, everyone was obsessed about their soulmates. It has become a trend of popular
culture, rather than respected part of life.

Magazines were shoving tips on how to meet your soulmate quicker, a rapid increase in sappy
romance novels on the fated meetings (though, Kagami has to admit, he has read a few in secret),
shops selling charms and lucky items… It was all too much.

He exhaled loudly, as he stopped by the red light, scaring a few girls with the sound. The redhead
crossed the street and entered a park. At the corner of it, he could already spot a basketball court, and
a certain bluehead dribbling the ball.

He entered the fenced court, making his way to the bench. Kagami put his bag down, unzipping it.
He changed into his basketball shoes and after doing a few quick warmups, he made his way to the
only slightly taller guy.

“Took you long enough.” Aomine commented, shooting his signature formless shot effortlessly.

“I’m always on time, so stop complainin’ and let’s play some ball.” Kagami bit back, already
standing in the defence position.
Aomine tsk-ed, but faced Kagami, already dribbling the ball.

If somebody would’ve come up to Aomine a few months ago and told that Kagami and he were going to be hanging out practically every weekend, he would have laughed at their face.

The blue haired teen still couldn’t believe the fact that his biggest rival actually was a rather cool guy to hangout with (but he would never say it out loud). They hadn’t many things in common, except undeniable passion for basketball, food and bickering. Or, as Aomine suddenly realised, he didn’t know much about Kagami to begin with.

Yes, he knew that he came back to Japan from America, that he was obsessed with the ring dangling around his neck to the point of paranoia, but that was about all the facts he knew about Kagami outside basketball. This has never bothered him at all, but for some reason his mind strangely drifted to the thought.

“Hell yeah, man!” Kagami yelled out in English, dunking the ball through the hoop. “Damn, Aomine, your defence is hella weak today.” He smirked, only irking the bluehead more.

“I just let you pass, since you were struggling anyways.” Aomine, bit back, giving his signature crooked smile in return.

“I wasn’t struggling! You just couldn’t handle my skill.” Kagami bickered back, a flame in his eyes.

“Yeah yeah, whatever suits you.” The bluehead waved his hand, taking the ball and starting a new attack. “Better watch out, ‘cause I’m not gonna hold back.” He threatened, playfully of course, going into position.

And Aomine didn’t lie. He went full mode for the last few baskets, as he practically destroyed Kagami in their usual one-on-one. But that was no surprise for both of them.

“Well,” the darker teen started, wiping sweat from his forehead with the back of his hand. “at least you’re improving.”

Kagami glanced at him, doubled over, panting heavily from pleasant exhaustion. “Aw, is that a compliment?” The redhead teased, laughing brightly at sudden change in Aomine’s expression.
“You wish, bastard.” Aomine, furrowed his brows, leaving Kagami snickering. The blue haired teen slowly caught up to the other, both making their way to the bench.

Aomine stole a quick glance of Kagami. For some reason, he was bothered by the fact that he didn’t know any other minor, yet trivial information about the redhead. Yes, Aomine justified, it was only for the sake of their rivalship. Any minor details would aid him in the future.

Suddenly, Kagami lost his balance, twisting his right ankle uncomfortably. So, it was only natural, for him to ungraciously make his way down to the ground, like a huge tree being cut down. Yup, it was definitely the exhaustion that caused his leg muscles to give out.

Kagami squeezed his eyes shut, waiting for the contact with the cemented surface, but it never happened. Two equally strong hands wrapped themselves around his waist, pulling his body to safety. And that freaked Kagami the hell out.

“Whoa, bro. Didn’t know you were that exhausted.” Aomine commented, a slight mockery evident in his voice. However, Aomine being the Ahomine he is, somehow managed to trip over his own foot, losing his balance.

The next thing Aomine knows, he’s on top of Kagami, his hands on the both sides of his head, their distance way too close for any of boys’ liking. The midnight blue looked at fiery red, as their gazes connected in a weird and awkward way.

None of the teens registered that dim lights were pulsing out of their chests. It was only when the pulsing became bright and a strange sense of warmth surged through Aomine’s body, when he finally managed to rip his eyes away from Kagami’s, and look at his chest.

He was still not registering what was happening. Dumbfounded, he looked up at Kagami again, only to see the other teen blushing madly, almost to the colour of his hair. Aomine blinked couple of times, a dumb look on his face plastered permanently, it seems.

Kagami hurriedly, wiggled out of Aomine’s not-so grasp, his face feeling as hot as midday’s sun. He panically grabbed his bag, as he took off at the speed of light, leaving the blue haired teen sitting still on the ground.
Chapter Summary

Both Kagami and Aomine avoid each other for the sake of their own sanity.

Chapter Notes

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See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aomine Daiki, the ace of Tōō Academy, the ace of Generation of Miracles, has been left speechless for the first- no, second time in his short, but eventful life. The first time he couldn’t speak properly, was after he found his undying love for Mai-chan. But that was a story for another time.

“Dai-chan?” Momoi called out lightly, as her childhood’s best friend, which was supposed to be sleeping on the rooftop, was currently staring into the distance, eyebrows furrowed, little lines evident between them.

“Dai-chan?” the pink-haired girl shook his shoulder, calling his name with a bit more force. But no answer followed. Pouting her lips, Momoi decided to take a more dramatic approach. Spotting a magazine with Mai-chan’s face (and breasts) plastered on the front cover, completely abandoned by Aomine’s side, she grabbed it, and marched up to the edge of the rooftop.

“Dai-chan, if you won’t answer me this instant, I swear, I’ll throw the magazine off this damn roof,” her voice lowered dangerously, threatening to commit a crime of a mass scale.

“God dammit, Satsuki!” Aomine snapped out of his daze, jumping onto his feet immediately.

“Glad to have you back to the Earth,” she smiled sweetly, throwing the magazine back to Aomine. He glared at his friend, picking up his precious Mai-chan and wiping off the invisible dust. “Now, are you going to tell me what’s wrong with you today?”

The teen was known for skipping practices and, just generally, being uninterested in everything that required any sort of participation. But since the Winter Cup, Aomine was voluntarily coming to the
team’s practices, shocking Wakamatsu to the point of him sending a picture of Aomine ‘participating oh my god’ to Imayoshi (and Imayoshi replying with a simple ‘good’).

For the past few days, however, Aomine seemed to fall back into his old habits. And Momoi was concerned ("I told you, it was too good to be true," Wakamatsu complained, as Momoi set out to get Aomine. "His motivation is non-existent."). She was an insightful person, especially when it came to Aomine, but she couldn’t put her finger around this one.

“Satsuki, I’m not in the mood for your interrogations,” Aomine sat back down, laying on the concrete afterwards, looking up to the sky.

“Well, too bad, because I have to know the reason you started skipping the practices again.”

‘The reason, huh?’ Aomine huffed silently, furrowing his brows again.

The reason…The reason was simple, really. One of the most wanted basketball players in Japan, just could not comprehend the situation. Sitting glued to the same spot for 20 minutes straight, right after Kagami left, were the most confusing 20 minutes he has ever experienced.

Everything happened in slow-motion (and that was never a good sign). As he saw Kagami falling, his hands reached out without thinking. He wrapped them around the redhead’s waist, securing him in, so that the latter won’t get a concussion (not that Aomine cared). But the fact that he reacted like that without thinking, made him trip over his own foot, sending both of them flying onto the concrete.

As soon as Aomine found himself on top of Kagami, the world slowed down, the sounds were blocked out, only the heartbeat of two hearts thumping around him. A pleasant feeling spread across his chest, and the bluehead teen locked his eyes with Kagami’s.

And the worst part was, that he couldn’t turn them away. He felt like he was consumed by the flames of the Sun itself, every inch of his existence on fire, yet it didn’t burn him; it was warm and pleasant, safe.

Kagami’s eyes never left his either, which bothered Aomine a lot. The strong glow of their chests was what brought both of them out of the trance, setting Kagami’s face on fire, embarrassment kicking in. Aomine, however, was too shocked to be embarrassed. The only thing he could do was stare at the other teen, as he quickly got out from under Aomine, grabbing his belongings and
sprinting away with his twisted ankle.

A good amount of time passed, until Aomine finally gathered his things and left the court, heading home (“Oi, uncle! Are you gonna play?” two kids asked him. Aomine shook his head, snapping out of the daze).

He replayed the incident over and over again that day, and it has been looping in his head for days. He felt like he was losing his sanity at this point. This couldn’t be… real. Kagami couldn’t be his soulmate. Kagami was just Kagami — his rival and occasional practice partner, nothing more. It was not like he actually liked the redhead either. He was an OK guy. And on top of everything, he definitely didn’t have boobs, which were Aomine’s weaknesses, after all.

They haven’t texted each other after the incident, too. He felt a bit (just a bit) sad. If he had to be completely honest with himself, he considered Kagami as his friend. And he was used to late night texting and random messages from Kagami, when he was watching NBA games (Aomine felt both pleased and pissed that Kagami updated him on the matches). And now, not one small, insignificant text was sent his way. Aomine could only blame the bonding — the damned glow of their chests.

“Dai-chan?” Momoi called him for the third time today, with concern in her eyes.

“I just don’t feel that I need to practice more. I’ve done enough during this past month. Wakamatsu should be content with it.”

“It’s not about Wakamatsu, Daiki. It’s about your own well-being,” Momoi sighed, sitting down next to her friend. Aomine was in a sour mood, and she knew, that the only person that could put him in such state was Kagami. “Did the two of you had a fight?” she asked.

“Don’t be ridiculous,” Aomine rolled his eyes. “Wakamatsu might piss me off beyond the boundaries of this universe, but we never actually fight.”

“I wasn’t talking about Wakamatsu, Dai-chan.”

Aomine felt silent.

“What happened?”
“Nothing happened, Satsuki. We played ball on Saturday and that’s it,” he shrugged.

“Are you sure?” she asked cautiously, looking at Aomine.

“Satsuki, I was there, I know what happened,” the blue haired teen rolled his eyes again. Aomine wasn’t going to talk about it no matter how much she pressed him, so Momoi had to let it go for today.

“Just… Don’t leave it unsolved,” she sighed with a sad smile, standing up. She spared once last glance to Aomine, and left him alone to his thoughts.

The teen huffed, closing his eyes for a moment. He knew he couldn’t leave the situation like this. He had to talk with Kagami. They both had a few days to cool off, so it they were more or less ready to talk about things.

To Aomine, soulmates, the bonding didn’t really mean much. He wasn’t really interested in these things, in the first place, and his indifference grew bigger once Satsuki started obsessing about it with her friends. He had better things to do than look for his soulmate. Like play basketball, and be the best in Japan, for starters.

He was pretty sure, Kagami felt the same way.

He picked up his phone and started typing. Midway through it, he stopped. Aomine sat up, looking at the screen. No, it wasn’t the way he had to go about it. Letting out a heavy sigh, he fell back, locking his cellphone.

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“Kagami, focus!” Hyūga yelled out, passing the ball to the latter. Kagami managed to catch it just in time, but his footing was off, and he crashed into Izuki, sending both of them sliding through the court. Riko blew her whistle, bringing the game to a pause.
“I’m sorry, sempai!” Kagami jumped onto his feet immediately, offering his hand to Izuki, still laying on the floor.

“Kagami, what did I tell you!” Hyūga jogged up to him, smacking the back of his head, causing the younger male to stumble forward.

“I’m sorry, Captain. My footing was off and-”

“No no,” Hyūga stopped him. “your whole head was off,” he folded his arms over his chest, glaring at his kouhai.

“Hyūga, don’t be so harsh on him,” Riko walked up behind Kagami, “that’s my job.”

“Yeah, yeah…” the Captain mumbled under his nose, still keeping his glare set on Kagami.

“Kagami, I need you to sit this one out,” the older girl sighed, pointing to the sideline.

“But, Couch-“

“If you think, that I wouldn’t notice your sprained ankle, then you must really underestimate me,” she cut him off, quickly glancing at his foot. Kagami let out a heavy sigh, dragging his feet to the bench. No way he could argue with Riko.

He spent the rest of the practice watching, his whole body fidgeting, impatience evident in small movements. This occurred rarely — Kagami’s head was always in the game, aware of his surrounding and teammates. His senses were always heightened. But lately, he just couldn’t focus, even if it was the only thing he wanted to do.

What happened on Saturday, took quite a toll on Kagami. Everything that the redhead wanted to do right now, was to deny it ever happening. The way it all played out was not what he imagined. Especially, his soulmate being Aomine (he cringed at the thought).
It was not that he didn’t particularly like the other teen; he was a good rival, always kept the redhead on top of his form, but it just didn’t seemed right. He wasn’t someone that Kagami could bind his soul to — everything about Aomine was complete opposite to what Kagami could call ‘his type’. But the bonding was done, and there was nothing both of them could do about it.

The shrill sound of the whistle marked the end of the practice and he rose from the bench, following his teammates to the locker room. Changing quickly to his gakuran, the tall male left the school, Kuroko silently joining him at the gates of the grounds.

“You should be more careful, Kagami-kun,” the shorter male commented on his injured ankle, as Kagami limped next to him, both of the males heading to Maji Burger for their usual after school hang-out.

“I know, I was just… too much into the game, I guess,” the redhead replied, securing his sports bag on his shoulder.

“I’m sure you were,” Kuroko glanced up to him, claiming his story to be far-fetched. Kagami furrowed his brows, knowing that Kuroko will press him further, once inside Maji.

And he was right. Getting their usuals, Kuroko satisfying himself with only a vanilla shake, while Kagami attacked a mountain of burgers (there were at least a dozen of them), the shorter male fixated his gaze onto Kagami. Feeling Kuroko’s eyes boring into his skull, Kagami swallowed a massive piece of burger, looking up to his partner.

“What?”

“Nothing, Kagami-kun.”

“No, you obviously want to say something.”

“Okay.”

“Are you gonna ask, or…?” Kagami raised his eyebrow, destroying another burger.
“What exactly happened on Saturday?” Kuroko looked straight at the other.

“What do you mean? We played a game and went our separate ways,” the redhead shrugged.

“Kagami-kun, I can tell when you’re lying. And you’re lying right now,” Kuroko stated matter-of-factly. “Plus, Momoi-san texted me.”

“Oh?” Kagami’s eyes widened, as he almost choked on his eighth burger, not that anyone was counting.

“Momoi-san told me that Aomine was acting weird—”

“He always acts weird,” Kagami interrupted, huffing.

“Not like his usual self,” Kuroko corrected, “since the weekend. And as far as I know, the only thing he did on weekend was play basketball with you, Kagami-kun.” the male finished, reaching for his milkshake. “And please don’t lie to me, Kagami-kun.” he added, finally taking a sip of his drink.

“Dammit, Kuroko…” Kagami put his burger down, avoiding eye contact with his teammate. “S-so, remember when Kise talked about s-soulmates and stuff,” the redhead involuntarily stuttered. Kuroko nodded, urging to continue.

“Uhh, so it kinda… happened… to me… and Aomine,” he mumbled the last part, the tips of his ears reddening. But Kuroko caught it anyway.

“Oh,” Kuroko stopped, his eyes a bit wider than usual. “So you bonded with Aomine-kun, then.”

“Y-yeah,” the redhead shrank in his seat, absent-mindedly playing with the ring hanging around his neck. An uncomfortable silence sat among them, making Kagami even more anxious than before. It felt weird saying it to someone else, that someone else being Kuroko, known for his laconic answers. Kagami wasn’t going to reveal how it happened though; it was too embarrassing for the redhead to even think about it.

“Can you say something?” Kagami broke the silence, looking up to his partner, for the first time
since he told about the incident.

“There’s nothing much to say, really, Kagami-kun,” he shrugged, taking a sip of his vanilla shake. “How did Aomine-kun reacted?”

“I… I don’t know. I bolted out of the court before he could say anything,” Kagami admitted.

“You do know, that you will have to talk about it eventually, right?” Kuroko looked at his teammate judgementally, raising one of his eyebrows for a good measure.

“I know, okay. I know,” Kagami let out a deep breath, putting his head in his hands.

He really, *really* didn’t want to face Aomine. Not after what he felt. Even though it was only a few seconds, to him it felt like hours. When their gazes locked, something surged from deep within him, spreading pleasingly in his chest. Once he looked into other’s eyes, he felt like he was being pulled into the depths of the ocean, his whole body being pierced through, yet it didn’t drown him; it was mellow and welcoming, *calming*.

“Uhh, Kagami?” a familiar deep baritone spoke behind Kagami. “Can we… talk?”

“See you tomorrow, Kagami-kun,” Kuroko stood up, grabbing his shake and sliding out of the booth. “Hello, Aomine-kun.”

“Hi, Tetsu,” Aomine scratched the back of his head awkwardly, as he knew that Kuroko already did his part of interrogation, and Satsuki will be bombarding the latter with questions in a few moments.

“Kuroko, you can’t just *leave*!” Kagami, turned around, shouting after his partner, as the other male disappeared from the diner. Aomine slid in, opposite to Kagami, feeling a bit fidgety.

“Just let him be,” the bluehead sighed, grabbing one of the burgers from Kagami’s tray.

“Oh, get your own, you bastard!” Kagami faced Aomine, sulking in his seat, as he watched the latter unwrap the burger, *that he paid for*, and stuff it in his mouth. Ignoring Kagami’s comment, Aomine swallowed the last bite, putting his hands on the table and leaning forward.
Kagami immediately shifted his gaze sideways, putting both of his hand onto his lap, feeling the intense gaze that the other teen held on him. Never in his life he felt this small.

“We gotta talk ‘bout what happened,” Aomine started. Kagami felt uncomfortable, to say the least. First of all, they haven’t spoke with each other for a consecutive number of four days (not that Kagami was counting), and now, the bluehead was the first one to approach him. Kagami couldn’t stand Aomine being rational.

“Yeah, we do,” he retorted.

“Okay,” Aomine cleared his throat, feeling awkward about the whole situation, “so… things happened,” he started.

“They did.”

“And… we can’t do anything about it, can we?”

“No, we cannot,” Kagami stated, still avoiding Aomine’s eyes.

“Look, I’m not particularly happy about this either, okay?” Aomine sighed, rubbing his face. “And- can you at least look at me while I’m talking?” the bluehead tsk-ed.

Kagami slowly raised his head, meeting Aomine’s eyes. Another wave of pleasantness spread across his chest, and he knew Aomine felt it too, since the other male’s body froze. Slowly, the lights from their chests started pulsing soothingly, both in perfect sync.

“A-as I was s-saying,” Aomine stuttered, tips of his ears reddening, Kagami’s own face heating up, “b-because we’re both unhappy, let’s just ignore all of t-this,” the bluehead motioned to their chests, that emitted light. “Let’s pretend it didn’t happen and carry on with our lives.”

Kagami furrowed his eyebrows, throwing a cold look at Aomine. The latter male blinked, taken aback by Kagami.
“How can I ignore this?” Kagami raised his voice, folding his arms on his chest. “How can you even say it?”

“Huh?” Aomine looked at the redhead questioningly. He really didn’t understand Kagami.

“Maybe it doesn’t mean anything to you, but it’s important to me,” Kagami stood up, grabbing his sports bag. “I just can’t pretend it’s nothing, even though I really want to,” the male threw one last glance at Aomine and walked out, or more like limped out, of the diner, leaving the burgers behind.

And yet again, Aomine was left sitting in the same spot, dumbfounded.

Chapter End Notes

Here ya go.

I swear the 'head in the game' part was unintentional *sweats*.

I really appreciate all your comments and support! Thank you!
Chapter Summary

Aomine is confused (like always) and Kagami avoids dealing with it.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

The Maji Burger Incident, as Aomine chose to call it, was still fresh in his mind, even though it happened a few weeks ago. Kagami didn’t show up to their usual weekend game (not that it surprised him) and his cell phone was dead silent from the redhead’s side. It was already Saturday and Aomine decided to stay in this time. It was no point in going out for a quick game when nobody was there to challenge him. He did go those two times to the court, slightly hoping that Kagami will show up for it, but both times Aomine found himself alone dribbling the ball for an hour.

Letting out a lazy groan, the bluehead stretched his body, the muscles drawn out in a pleasant pull. Readjusting his position on the bed, Aomine reached for a plastic box that was pushed under the bed. Grabbing a basketball magazine, he absentmindedly started flicking through it, as the warmth of the afternoon slowly seeped inside.

He didn’t get it. He couldn’t understand why Kagami reacted the way he did at the Maji. Wakamatsu always let Aomine know that he was as dense as a brick wall, which the teen didn’t appreciate at all, but right now he was feeling like one. He could still remember the way Kagami flared up, his intense gaze piercing through Aomine, as if he just insulted his whole family and his ancestors.

He remembered Kagami tell him that even though he wanted to ignore the Bond, it was important to him. And this is where the bluehead was lost. He couldn’t understand what was so important, so sacred that the redhead had to lash out at him with such force. Soulmates were… soulmates. It was an obsession of dreamy girls not tough basketball players. It was Satsuki’s hobby not something he could see Kagami do in his spare time (not that he knew him that well).

Aomine did feel a little bit shit of a person. Even though he was dense (he already decided to live with the fact), he could still see how much Kagami was upset over it and even disappointed with Aomine. An uncomfortable feeling set in his chest, as he tried to rub it off with his hand. Closing the magazine, the one Kagami lent him weeks ago dammit, he rolled onto his back, hands covering his face.

He shouldn’t care about it so much. Kagami was his rival, for Christ’s sake. Aomine shouldn’t be worrying over the other teen at all. The only thing that was important to him was basketball and
proving that he was the best, not dwelling on somebody else’s *feelings*. But the aching in his chest was disagreeing with his mind.

“God dammit,” Aomine cursed out loud, grabbing his phone off the nightstand. The slight pain was not going away and it irritated the teen. Unlocking his phone, he quickly sent a message to Satsuki, a reply coming seconds later.

Cladded in only grey sweats, Aomine grabbed the first t-shirt he saw and pulled it over his head. He padded down the hallway, grabbing himself a can of Aquarius*. As if on cue, Satsuki burst through the front door of his home, Aomine already sitting on the couch comfortably.

“Dai-chan~!” Momoi shouted out, making her way into the living room. She was carrying a tote bag with her, in which, Aomine assumed, were magazines and he started to regret his decision immediately.

“Aominecchi, good to see you~,” Kise appeared right behind Satsuki, waving his hand intensely, a wide grin plastered on his face.

“What is he doing here?” the bluehead teen groaned throwing his head back in annoyance.

“*Kise-kun* is here to help out,” the girl replied, plopping down next to Aomine on the couch.

“You’re so mean, Aominecchi!” Kise pouted, seating himself on an armchair, situated across the pair.

“I have brought my academic books on this matter, we cannot trust the magazines only,” a low voice echoed through the house as Midorima stepped into the living room, Takao behind him, dragging a cardboard box.

“Is Akashi coming as well?” Aomine looked at Momoi, his question dripping with sarcasm.

“I have contacted Akashi, however, he had a meeting to attend to and had to refuse our gathering,” Midorima fixed his glasses. “Nevertheless, he has informed me that he will pay you a visit soon enough on the matter, no need to worry,” he added, completely missing the point of bluehead’s rhetorical question.
“Great,” Aomine sighed. All he wanted was Satsuki’s... opinion on the issue at hand (he would even call it help per se), but what he’d got was an emergency gathering of national importance.

“Okay, Dai-chan,” Momoi began as Midorima occupied an empty armchair next to Kise and Takao was left to sit on the floor, “what do you want to know exactly?”

“Well,” he rubbed the back of his neck, “I think I need to know how it works?” he spoke up voicing it more as a question. Kise’s eyes lit up as he was about to begin, but Midorima beat him to it, grabbing one of the books from the box.

“I guess, I am the right person to introduce the Soulmates then,” the green haired teen cleared his throat, ignoring Kise’s angry gaze directed at him. “Soulmates are a fascinating natural phenomenon that has been known to happen thousands of years ago. The academics and scientists alike haven’t been able to pinpoint the exact time when in occurred in homo sapiens species, though some argue that the traces of modern soulmates could be found even before that, very intriguing, might I add.”

“Midorimacchi,” Kise interrupted, the expression on his face looking like he just bit into a sour lemon, “this is not the way to go about it. You’re bringing the mood down.”

“Well, excuse me then,” Midorima shut his book forcefully. “If you’re such an expert, please, share your knowledge with us, Kise.”

“Soulmates are a wonderful thing, Aominecchi,” Kise scooched closer to the edge of the armchair. “But, unlike Midorimacchi,” the blonde threw a nasty look at the other teen, “it’s not that technical. Actually, it’s pretty straightforward.

“See, no one really knows how actually soulmates work. Things we know right now have been discovered through observance and evidence. Of course, at some point, scientists got involved, but the whole work of soulmates is still unknown. And that’s the real beauty of it.”

“You shouldn’t be believing trashy teen magazines, Aomine,” Midorima huffed, his arms crossed on his chest. Kise ignored the comment and continued on.

“Several things are one hundred percent true, Aominecchi. First one – everyone has a soulmate. There are no exceptions. Number two – the Bond and the Bonding itself cannot be seen by anyone else but the two people who are soulmates. Three – the Bonding, and this is the most beautiful part of
it all, is when the two soulmates meet and their chests start emitting a bright warm light,” the blond sighed dreamily.

“More like scorching fire,” Aomine muttered, but Kise managed to catch it, his golden eyes going wide.

“Aominecchi, did you… did you find your soulmate!” the blond teen gasped loudly.

“You didn’t tell them?” Aomine turned to Momoi, who was observing the conversation silently.

“Of course I didn’t tell them,” she huffed somewhat offended by her best friend’s question. “Do I look like I share everyone’s secrets?”

“Well, this is exciting,” Takao chimed in, comfortably sitting on the ground next to Midorima and the box of books.

“Oh my God!” Kise squealed in excitement. “It wasn’t Kurokocchi, was it?” he got serious in a split second, narrowing his eyes at the teen in front of him.


“Oh, great then!” Kise was back to his usual smiley self.

“I, of course, already knew,” Midorima cleared his throat.

“Yeah, right,” Kise rolled his eyes. Everyone could tell that the two had a different outlook on the soulmates and this particular situation made their differentiating opinions even more obvious.

“It was evidently clear,” the green haired teen continued. “Aomine’s life consists of three things – basketball, Mai-chan and food. So, when Momoi asked for my assistance, I immediately put things together. There is no way in the world Aomine would suddenly get interested in soulmates, unless he already found one;’ the teen fixed his slipping frames.
“Look,” Aomine sighed loudly, already tired of the mess, “I just… I might’ve said some… things that might’ve been out of line and… kind of, maybe messed it up a little bit.”

“Aominecchi!” the blond gasped, covering his mouth with his hand.

“I just assumed that he-, I mean they, thought the same thing, that it would get into our way!”
Aomine stood up and started pacing the room. The uncomfortable grip in his chest tightened, almost making the latter choke.

“Dai-chan, you need to calm down,” Satsuki grabbed him by his arm, bringing him back onto the couch. He shifted awkwardly under everyone’s gaze, slightly embarrassed by his sudden outburst.

“Tell me, Aomine,” Midorima spoke up, snatching another book from the box. “Are you experiencing any… unusual symptoms?”

“What? I don’t even know what are usual symptoms,” he sighed. It became sort of habit by now.

“Well, when you are with your soulmate,” Kise gave him a look that had a mixture jealousy and joyfulness, “you tend to feel calm, safe. Most of the time, both of your chest would glow as the two of you are together. It’s a sign of happiness,” he explained. “Even when you think of them, you might experience sudden warmth. And they can feel it too. That’s why it’s called the Bond.”

“And on the other spectrum,” Midorima chimed in, “the unusual symptoms might include feeling of emptiness, uncomfortable chest pains, sadness, worry and, in very extreme cases, forms of depression. This happens when the soulmates have been separated for a long period of time, had serious fights that affect their Bond or…”

“Or?” Aomine gulped.

“Or the freshly created Bond has been rejected by one of the soulmates. It is unnatural, in a way, to dismiss what has already been destined to happen. If one of the pair rejects the Bond, the other can present same symptoms as well; after all, the souls are connected.”

“Dai-chan, I have a feeling the news didn’t sit too well with you, so you… kind of rejected the idea of soulmates,” Momoi put her hand onto Aomine’s knee, comforting the teen.
“I… might have.”

“Hmm, fascinating,” Midorima murmured, pulling out a small notebook from the inside of his jacket, scribbling something down. Aomine started feeling like a subject of an experiment.

“Don’t worry, Aominecchi,” Kise tried to lighten up the mood. “We’ll help you out. After all, you have three of the best Soulmates’ experts in your house!” he flashed a bright smile to the latter.

“I cannot believe you skipped your usual Saturday game with Kagami for this, though,” Takao spoke up. Aomine blinked a few times, a slight tint of red rising to the tips of his ears.

“Of course he would skip it, Takao,” Kise retorted. “Soulmate problems are important.”

“How thrilling,” Midorima commented to no one in particular, his sharp green eyes transfixed onto Aomine’s heated face.

“Okay!” the bluehead suddenly stood up. “I think that’s enough for today. The Bond makes you feel things, blah blah blah, I have to fix the situation,” he grabbed Momoi by her arm, effortlessly pulling her up from the couch. The rest of the boys got the message loud and clear, as they stood up, heading for the door.

“Dai-chan, I’m leaving the magazines with you. Just in case you want to read them,” Satsuki smiled warmly, despite her aching arm.

“Yeah, sure.”

“And don’t hesitate to text me, Aominecchi!” the blond winked pointing finger guns at the latter male. Midorima walked up to the blue haired teen handing him three books.

“I know academic reading is not your strong suit,” Midorima began, “but they have many answers to basic questions about soulmates.”
Aomine blinked at the low-key insult thrown at him, taking the books into his hands. He was certain, he won’t be looking at them anytime soon.

“What about those?” Aomine asked, pointing at the box Takao was lifting up.

“They are today’s lucky item for Cancers – cardboard box of books,” Midorima said as if it was the most natural thing in the world.

With a last wave from Momoi, the front door was shut and Aomine sank into the silence of the empty house. He let out another sigh laced with frustration, dropping the books on the couch. He had a strong feeling coming from somewhere that he had to fix things with Kagami, but he couldn’t believe the fact that he even thought about it. There was some sort of unexplainable pull forcing him to patch up their rivalship (Aomine would never call it friendship) and it scared him.

Rubbing his face in a tired manner, the teen headed to the hallway. He grabbed the basketball and stepped outside into the warmth of late spring. He had to clear his head. And the only way he knew was through basketball.

● ● ●

“How positive? Fifty percent positive or one hundred percent positive?”

“Three hundred forty-seven percent positive,” Kuroko replied as they came to a halt at the red light in front of the pedestrian crossing.

“I just… don’t want to accidentally meet him, that’s all,” Kagami cleared his throat, clinging to his bag firmly.
“You won’t. I just received a text message from Momoi-san and she said that Aomine is currently in his home with no intention to come out.”

“Good,” Kagami sighed in relief, a slight pain in his chest gripping his heart. The unfamiliar feeling was constantly with Kagami since the last time he saw Aomine, which was over two weeks ago. The pain would vary – sometimes it came as a strong wave clenching him at night, sometimes it was like a little uncomfortable itch under his chest, annoying and present.

He wasn’t sure what it was, though. He knew it had something to do with soulmates, but Kagami couldn’t remember anyone mentioning anything like that happening before. He only heard positive, good things – like the warmth spreading through the body, pleasantness and safety surround the person.

Kagami really didn’t want to face Aomine right now. Or ever. The not-so-pleasant conversation he had with him last time really put things into perspective for the redhead. Aomine wanted nothing to do with it. Which Kagami sort of expected. He understood it. Aomine was Aomine, his rival and occasional practice partner (though they’ve been meeting up for Saturday games as on schedule). Still, the young man couldn’t shake off the thoughts of actually having a soulmate, doesn’t matter how unwanted. After years of constant uneasiness, his search came to an end. Or more likely to an edge of an extremely sharp cliff that had a field of cacti at the bottom of it. Either way, Kagami wanted to be somewhat happy. And deep deep down, he was (even though he didn’t want to admit it out loud).

But Aomine’s words were as violent and piercing as a thousand-degree knife slicing through a can of Coke dipped in liquid nitrogen. He shouldn’t care. He really shouldn’t worry over as petty as Aomine’s words. But for some unknown reason, he did care (and unfortunately, he actually knew the reason why).

“Sorry Kuroko, I know you don’t really want to practice with me, but I really needed to clear my head a little bit,” Kagami said, putting his bag onto one of the benches placed inside the public court.

“Don’t worry, Kagami-kun,” he replied, pulling the wrist sweatbands onto his arms. “But don’t overdo yourself. Your ankle just healed. And we need you on the team.”

“Yeah, yeah,” Kagami gave Kuroko a toothy grin, dribbling the orange ball to the middle of the court. “First to score ten baskets buys at Maji’s!”
“Deal,” the bluehead’s eyes sparkled with determination as he wanted to avoid paying for the enormous mountain Kagami was sure to order.

Kagami dribbled the ball, swiftly bypassing Kuroko and scoring his first basket. It felt good to be back on the court, feel the roughness of the ball against his hand, the pull of the muscles as he moved forward. These two weeks he was unable to practice at all. Not because of his ankle. The strain was gone in a few days anyway (thank his great regenerating powers). Riko made the ace sit on the bench for almost all of their practices because he was distracted (and Riko didn’t want to risk her team members’ well-being). On top of that, both Saturdays, as per usual, he headed out to the same court him and Aomine would have their game. Both times he wouldn’t pay attention to what he was doing, until both of those times he would come to a halt as he would spot the tan bluehead on the court, shooting hoops.

The redhead would quickly turn around and speed-walk away, embarrassed. So, this time Kagami made sure that Aomine wouldn’t be there and brought Kuroko along with him. Kuroko assured the teen that Aomine wasn’t going to show up, as assured by Momoi herself through the text and Kagami bought into it.

A flash of orange zoomed through his side, followed by Kuroko’s small frame. Kagami was so deep in thought that he didn’t guard the basket properly and ended up giving Kuroko his first point. The pair played for almost an hour, Kagami going easy on his teammate. With the final score of five to ten, Kagami took the win, both of them heading back to the bench.

The taller male threw a bottle of water to Kuroko, who caught it with ease, and the two took a seat, panting lightly.

“What are you going to do about Aomine?” Kuroko asked, his eyes carefully following Kagami’s expressions.

“What do you mean, Kuroko? I’ve already told you – he made it clear as a day that he wants nothing to do with soulmates. I mean, I’ve expected it, but…”

“Kagami-kun,” the blue-head began softly, “you cannot leave things like that. I don’t know much about soulmates, that’s the expertise area of Kise-kun, but I can see how important it is to you.”

Damn Kuroko and his abnormal perception skills.
“Well, too bad, because I’ve already made up my mind,” Kagami furrowed his sharp eyebrows. “It’s only going to be a hassle trying to deal with him. I will pretend this didn’t happen and carry on with my life. Just like he wanted.”

“Kagami-kun-”

“I have been thinking about it for the last few weeks and I feel like this is the right way to go about it,” Kagami sighed heavily, ignoring Kuroko’s words. “It’s whatever. I’ll be over this in no time, back on the team with a clear head.”

“Kagami-kun-”

“Believe me, it’s for the best. I mean, it took me a while to get over the initial shock, but like I’ve said, I want nothing to do with Aomine or the Bond.”

“Kagami?” A low voice called him out as footsteps neared the bench the two boys were sitting on. Kagami froze, choking onto his water.

“Kuroko, you’ve told me-” the redhead looked at his teammate in panic.

“Hello, Aomine-kun,” the smaller male greeted the other.

“Hey, Tetsu,” the blue-haired teen rubbed the back of his neck. “Were you guys playin’?”

“Yes, just a quick game,” Kuroko replied, Kagami staying silent as he packed his sports bag. This set up was way too familiar for the teen.

“Oh, cool,” Kagami sensed a hint of disappointment in Aomine’s voice. “Actually, I… wanted to talk with Kagami.”

Kuroko was about to reply and most likely leave the two teens alone, but the redhead beat him to it, straightening up his posture, as he grabbed his sports bag, throwing it over his shoulder, holding the strap in a fierce grip. He turned to face Aomine, their chests immediately pulsing with a dim light. It was weaker than before, but Kagami decided to not pay any attention to it.
“I’m pretty sure there’s nothing new you have to tell me,” the teen finally responded, his eyebrows furrowed, a slight frown on his string face.

“I just wanted to clear some things out-”

“No need, Aomine,” Kagami cut him off. “You made it pretty direct. And you know what, I agree with it. It would only make this whole thing more complicated than it is. Don’t worry, I’ll make sure to pretend nothing happened,” the teen started walking out of the court, Kuroko following behind. Kagami saw Aomine flinch visibly as if the words hurt him, but he brushed it off as a fragment of imagination.

“Kagami, that’s not what-”

“You can stop stressing over it, it’s done.”

“Listen, you absolute fuckin’-” Aomine started, pacing towards Kagami’s frame, but Kuroko stepped in front of him, stopping the other male. Kagami continued on as he left the fenced court.

“Aomine-kun, I think it’s the best to leave Kagami alone for now,” he spoke lowly.

“Tetsu, I couldn’t even get a sentence out to that idiot and he goes off making assumptions as if it was his fucking job!” he groaned out, pointing at Kagami who was already halfway down the block.

“I could say the same thing to you, Aomine-kun, and don’t try to deny it.”

“Fine. But I came to fuckin’ apologize to that prick and he just yells into my fuckin’ face.”

“He didn’t yell.”

“Jesus Christ, Tetsu! Whose side are you on?!” Aomine glared at the shorter teen, annoyance written all over his face.
“I’m on the side of logic. And both of you have none.”

The bluehead groaned out, throwing his head back in frustration. He didn’t expect to meet Kagami here, but either way, it was a perfect opportunity to kind of mend the situation. Except that damn idiot decided to walk away for the millionth time. Couldn’t he just listen to what Aomine had to say?

“Maybe you should let the situation cool off for a while. It doesn’t seem like Kagami is in a mood to talk about it.”

“Was he ever in the fuckin’ mood,” Aomine muttered.

“Just give it some time.”

“Fine.”

“Good.”

“See you around, Tetsu,” Aomine sighed, heading towards the middle of the court, dribbling the ball as he walked away.

“See you,” the smaller male replied, jogging out of the court, trying to catch up with Kagami.

Chapter End Notes

*Aquarius - a famous sports drink in Japan.

I HAVE RISEN FROM THE GRAVE. IT'S BEEN 84 YEARS [insert meme here], but I am back!

First of all, I want to thank you all who are still subscribed to this abandoned child of mine and prayed for it to be updated. The prayers have been answered. And hopefully, nearly 4k will pay for my sins.

I cannot promise that I'll be updating regularly (or on a specific schedule), but I'll do my best to update the story as frequently as my work allows it.

I hope you'll continue to support the story and comment, because your comments are the
biggest motivation for me (or any writer, really).

I'll be back soon with another update. Stay tuned.

-Jynx
Kagami yawned, his eyes watering up. Slowly stretching out, his body slumped back into the seat. The teen turned his head to the side and started staring out of the window. The teacher’s voice was distant, the sound of students’ scribbling somewhere at the back of the teen’s head. He wasn’t able to sleep well for a past few days. Or sleep at all. The constant pain in his chest was starting to drive him insane. He couldn’t properly do anything anymore. The practice was out of the question. And to make matters worse, a constant headache made its permanent home in his head. He was always tired, but still, he couldn’t rest. A yawn escaped his mouth again, making the teen stretch out.

Was Aomine feeling the same? Was he also unable to sleep because of it? He had to, Kagami assumed. If this was a soulmate thing (and the teen was sure it was), then Aomine had to have similar problems. Kagami couldn’t suffer alone. It wasn’t fair, anyways. The blue-haired idiot was repulsed by the idea since the very beginning. He was probably grinning from ear to ear about Kagami’s misery, rejoiced to have the link between them growing weaker and weaker.

Kagami huffed with the sound of the bell ringing through the school. He stood up on auto-pilot, bowed to the teacher and grabbed his book bag hanging on the side of his desk (not that he had anything taken out of it anyways). With the last lesson finished, Kuroko silently popped up next to Kagami.

“Ready, Kagami-kun?”

“Always am.”

As both of them quietly made their way through the school, through the mass of rushing students, Kagami could feel Kuroko soundlessly looking at him with those damned blue eyes of his. A shiver made down the taller teen’s spine as his friend’s eyes bored into him mercilessly.

“Kuroko, for Michael Jordan’s sake, could you not?” Kagami finally snapped, throwing a nasty look at his partner.
“Sorry, Kagami-kun. I was just wondering how you were doing since… that game of ours.”

“I’m fine,” the teen winced at the iciness of his own voice. He didn’t intend to sound so mad, especially with Kuroko, since he didn’t do anything at all, but the constant pain he was carrying with him started to affect him more than he anticipated.

“If you say so,” the blue-head said calmly, giving his friend the space he knew the latter needed. Kagami was a hot-headed person, and once he was in a bad mood, there was no other option but to let him burn out on his own.

The pair crossed the inner grounds of the school, approaching the gym where they could already hear their teammates’ voices booming through. A slight pause was followed by a mass groan, probably Izuki throwing out one of his not-so-brilliant puns. The two boys hurried to the locker rooms, changing out of their uniforms with speed. Hyūga barked out a few pointers and the team started their warm ups with the whistle from Riko.

Kagami was irritated. Kuroko was still watching him like a hawk (he should be paying attention to where he’s running), the mild headache lingering like a cloud in the teen’s head. And that idiot Aomine constantly present in his mind. A sudden pain in his chest seized Kagami as he stopped in his tracks abruptly, sending two first years onto the ground as they slammed into redhead’s muscled back.

“Kagami!” Hyūga fumed, storming up their ace. “What are you doing!” he shouted, not as a question but a statement. “It’s the tenth time this week you do this!”

“I’m sorry, Captain. It won’t happen again,” the teen responded, swallowing down the painful vice grip on his chest, straightening himself out.

“Not likely,” Hyūga mumbled, getting back into the formation.

The practice itself was a complete disaster. Riko rolled out a new game plan for the team, new moves everyone had to memorise and work on, and Kagami failed at all of it. The ache was so intense, at one point Kagami could swear he saw the light of the afterlife approach him. Koganei found himself onto the floor more often than usual, Izuki was greeting walls and even Kuroko had his fair share of unintentional and unforeseen smacks to the head. Not even his famous misdirection couldn’t help him avoid Kagami’s clumsiness. By the end of the practice, Hyūga looked like a steam locomotive about to burst with heat.
“Alright, everyone! Gather ‘round!” the Captain’s voice rang through the panting of the tired players. A circle formed around Hyūga, Riko joining his side. Kagami, however, kept his distance. Just in case.

“This was a complete disaster;” the Captain said calmly. “If the Winter Cup has still stuck around in your head – throw it away,” he gave a pointed look to the team. “It doesn’t mean anything anymore. The only thing it means is that everyone now knows how strong we are,” Hyūga continued, the serenity in his voice unnerving the team. “But from what I’ve seen today, we’re back to square one. Pull yourselves together. Dismissed.”

The team gave a discouraged nod, slowly heading for the lockers, first years scurrying to clean up the gym. Kagami stumbled to the bench, picking up his towel and a bottle of water. Rubbing his face with one hand, he followed the rest of the guys into the locker rooms. He couldn’t believe himself. Since academics weren’t his strongest point, Kagami took pride in his basketball skills. Yet, today proved to be a complete embarrassment, and he knew most of the words Hyūga said were targeted at him.

The problem was, it wasn’t Winter Cup that caused the teen to mess up so many times. The Bond wasn’t settling. Kagami was forced to lay awake during the nights, trying to endure the pains in his chest, tiredness catching up through the day. He couldn’t do anything about it but to wait it out. Or that was what the redhead decided to do. It should pass eventually, right?

The teen skipped the showers, unable to stand the presence of his teammates (he knew they were giving him looks, some of concern, others of mild annoyance). Grabbing his bag, without changing out of his practice uniform, Kagami quickly walked out of the school grounds, leaving Kuroko behind. He needed to be alone.

Passing Maji Burger on his way home, the redhead could swear he saw a mop of blue sitting by the window, a mountain of burgers on the table. Kagami rushed straight ahead, heading for his apartment building. He didn't want any unnecessary encounters, thank you very much.

Reaching his place in a record time, Kagami pulled out his keys, shoving them into the door with shaking hands. His breath quickened as he swung the door open, reaching the safety of his home. The teen slumped against his front door, knees giving out. He felt tired, exhausted, weak. Closing his eyes, Kagami let out slow breaths to calm his wild heart. He didn’t even know why he felt so shaky in the first place. Not that he had poor stamina, he was a basketball player for God’s sake.

The familiar pain shot through his chest, seizing Kagami’s breath. The teen chocked, his arm automatically clutching over his heart. He squeezed his eyes, praying for the pain to settle into a dull
ache that he was already accustomed to. As if on command, the pain stopped, Kagami taking a big gulp of air into his lungs. It still hurt but it was just a mild throb, constantly there, reminding Kagami of the situation.

Picking himself off the floor, he stumbled into his bedroom, still a little dizzy from the unexpected seizure, picking a set of fresh clothes and made his way into the bathroom. Stripping off his sports uniform, still damp with sweat from the practice, Kagami stepped into a steaming shower, a hot cascade of water loosening up his tensed muscles. Enjoying the brief moment of peace, the teen took his time, trying to forget why he found himself in such position.

Why couldn’t it have been that one cute guy from the coffee shop that he always passed on his way to school? Why couldn’t it have been his next door neighbour’s daughter? Why it had to be the one and only person Kagami didn’t want it to be? He thought a lot about it. He tried to see any kind of logical explanation to why it had to be Aomine out of all people. He tried looking into the science behind Soulmates, but nothing offered a good enough reason for such a trick fate played on him. He should have stayed back in the States. That way, it couldn’t have happened.

Changing into new clothes, the teen quickly heated up some leftovers from yesterday’s dinner, chomping down the food, wanting to go to sleep as fast as possible. He needed to rest. Or try to, at least.

With the lights off, only the dim moonlight cascading a long stripe across his room through the open gap in his curtains, Kagami shut his eyes, hoping to fall asleep.

● ● ●

Aomine was tense. He tapped his fingers on the desk, the teacher explaining away something the teen didn’t care about anyways. He hadn’t seen Kagami in days (not that it mattered, he tried to reassure himself) and Kuroko hadn’t kept him in the loop with what was happening. The weird ache has grown in these past days, yet never reaching an abnormal pain that would make him worry. It was just dull discomfort that he could feel in his chest, constantly. Midorima has gladly explained that it was due to the Bond’s unstable condition, making him feel things. It was annoying.

But this particular annoying thing pushed Aomine to try and talk to Kagami again. He couldn’t live with an itch under his skin for the rest of his life. He needed to sort this one out. And for that, he needed to see that idiot Kagami – even if the latter didn’t want it. He couldn’t really tell why he was so determined to set things straight. There was just something that was sort of pushing things inside,
and Aomine naturally blamed the Bond for it.

The bell rang, but the bluehead didn’t hear it until Wakamatsu slammed a book onto his table. Aomine lazily looked up, making his Captain fume.

“Why have you been skipping practice again?”

“I didn’t feel like it,” the other teen replied, continuing the annoying tapping. Wakamatsu’s eye twitched.

“The Inter High is around the damn corner, Aomine. We need a full team on the court to practice unless you want your ass beaten by Seirin again,” he growled.

“Mhm,” the younger teen yawned, ignoring everything that has been said.

“You little shit!” Wakamatsu lost it, grabbing Aomine by his collar. “You will show up to practice and you will practice!” he yelled, the students in the classroom stopping at the booming voice. Aomine just blinked. He really really didn’t care. But it seemed like he pushed Wakamatsu a little bit overboard this time.

“Fine,” the blue haired teen mumbled. The Captain released his collar, stepping back. Giving Aomine a glare he stomped out of the classroom, his Geography book in hand.

The other teen tsk-ed, standing up and heading for the door. Satsuki gave him the look but Aomine brushed it off and made his way across the hallway to the stairwell, climbing to the very top. The roof seemed like the best idea right now – he needed to rethink things.

There was a tiny teeny part where he actually felt sorry for the team, not so much for Wakamatsu, for not showing up, especially with Inter High approaching fast. But he had severe issues that were more important than practice. And for once it didn’t involve Mai-chan’s signing, surprisingly enough. Taking off his uniform’s blazer, Aomine laid down under the sun, closing his eyes. There was it again, that dull ache in his chest, making his lungs constrict for a brief moment. His mind drifted to Kagami and everything that happened so far. Aomine wasn’t going to apologise. He didn’t do anything he had to apologise for in the first place. It was not the teen’s fault if he didn’t want a soulmate. He wanted to play basketball, get scouted and continue playing basketball until his retirement. And then, maybe open up a basketball academy and coach young talents like himself (or Kagami, his brain added). That was about it. He didn’t care about anything else.
But here he was, Bonded to the last person on Earth he’d actually choose (he’d pick Satsuki over Kagami at any point in life and that already said something), managed to fuck it up in a speed of light, dragged almost all the Miracles into it in the process and succeeded in severing the Bond between his unwelcome soulmate. All within a frame of few weeks. He had to admit it, he was talented in that certain area.

Aomine spent the rest of the afternoon on the roof sleeping, showing up after the last class to pick up his bag from the classroom. His homeroom teacher hasn’t said a thing and the teen was glad he had basketball as an excuse to pull him out of any unpleasant situation. Satsuki was already at the gym, Aomine assumed as his best friend was nowhere to be found. Grabbing his bag, the bluehead decided to not give a fuck and leave Wakamatsu hanging as he left the school in slow steps. He could deal with the raging idiot later (Wakamatsu fumed the whole practice, torturing the rest of the team with warmups for Aomine’s absence. A team was a team, he said to them).

Aomine checked his phone once more, lazily dribbling the ball on the court he and Kagami used to play on weekends. There were ten messages from Satsuki, twenty messages and five calls from Wakamatsu, one lengthy one from Midorima (which made Aomine raise his eyebrow) but none from Kuroko or Kagami (he shouldn’t have hoped anything from Bakagami really. It’s not like they were on good terms). His school bag was carelessly thrown onto one of the benches on the side of the court, the bluehead teen shooting hoops in the middle. Maybe he should send a photo to Wakamatsu, that could shut him up.

For some odd reason, he was mildly offended and annoyed with himself that he didn’t manage to catch Kagami. A few days ago, Aomine could have sworn, he saw a fiery red rushing pass the Maji Burger but his eyes could’ve been deceiving him, for all the teen knew. He needed to get the other to talk with him. He wasn’t going to apologise, Aomine already established that. He was going to… To be honest, Aomine didn’t know what he was going to do. He needed to talk. That was as far as he thought things through. So, say, Kagami agrees to hear him out, but some holy miracle, what then?

The bluehead sighed, throwing the ball with one hand, making it in effortlessly (as always). Aomine jogged up to the bouncing ball, dribbling it a few times as he went back to the three-point line. Okay, the bluehead needed to make a plan. Or rehearse a speech, because every time he saw Kagami he wanted to punch him and himself in the face. And that was not a good conversation starter. Step one – do not under any circumstances apologise. Aomine didn’t want a soulmate, he didn’t need to say sorry for that. Step two – try not to insult Kagami. He knew that the other teen was as dangerous and intense as fire itself and one wrong word could throw Aomine back to square one. Aomine dribbled the ball. Step three… Step three would be to… The bluehead made another perfect shot. The next step had to be talking. But this vague statement didn’t help Aomine at all with the plan. He needed details, specifics, carefully crafted strategy.

“Oi, uncle!” an annoying voice cut through the teen’s train of thought. “You’re gonna play or what?” a little kid with his squad behind him asked. Aomine threw him a nasty look to which the kid
replied by sticking out his tongue and pulling the lower lid of his eye. The disrespect kids had these days!

Swallowing down a curse, Aomine moved to the bench his bag was on, giving the court to the kids. He wasn’t doing anything productive anyways. Sighing deeply, he sat down on the bench, running a hand through his hair (it was getting longer, he needed to get a haircut). He pulled out a beaten up notebook which was used for all the subjects he had at school, and a pen he borrowed from someone earlier (it could’ve been Sakurai). He flipped to an empty page, a pen swirling between his fingers. Satsuki has suggested him a few days ago to make a list. She saw him struggling internally with everything, the fact that he had a soulmate, and that his soulmate was Kagami out of all the people in Tokyo. The list, his best friend said, had to have positives he saw in the redhead and then negatives. This would help Aomine to finally make up his damn mind since he was conflicting with himself.

Taking the opportunity of a short break, he readjusted the pen in his hand, taking a deep breath.

“Positives,” he muttered, hand hovering above the left side of the notebook. Well, Kagami was an alright basketball player. Skilled basketball player, his brain chimed in, making the teen tsk in annoyance. His pen started moving.

However, his hand shifted to the right side, pouring out the negatives. An idiot. Hot-headed. Annoying. Clumsy. Always wore a frown when he saw Aomine. Had an idiotic smile. Especially when he would score a point against Aomine on their one-on-one. Stole the bluehead’s Jordan’s. Ate like an animal. Didn’t shut up. Didn't like Mai-chan. Had unlimited access to ESPN and NBA TV (Aomine was jealous). Worked hard. Never gave up even when he always lost to Aomine. Could access the Direct Drive Zone.

Soon, the negative column was being filled with things that could be in ‘positives’ but Aomine didn’t want to admit it. So, he continued filling in the right side. Had passion. Loved basketball. This one the teen stuck out, rewriting it to another column. His eyes would light up when he was on the court. Had the dumbest smile after each of their Saturday games. Had a firm body.

Aomine blinked. He stared down at the last entry, his brain trying to catch up with what was written down in the ‘positives’ column. Had a firm body. As panic rose, the teen frantically ran his pen multiple times across the word, trying to hide the shame with force. What the hell was that, Aomine pondered looking at the phrase now-hidden with ink. He wasn’t thinking straight. Probably the Bond was interfering again. Or so Aomine hoped. Desperately hoped. He smacked his forehead, turning the hand all over his face in frustration.

The sound of someone approaching the court made Aomine open his eyes, as his dark blue stared into familiar scorching red ones. Kagami was on the court. Kagami was on the court. He was standing between the entrance, frozen still as he looked at Aomine with slight fear in his eyes. The
bluehead stood up slowly, his notebook laying forgotten on the bench, taking a step towards Kagami. He was still standing unmoving.

“Uh, Kagami?” Aomine called him out carefully. He felt like he was approaching a wild animal (*a wild tiger*, his brain supplied) that could run away at any sudden movement. He noticed Kagami’s usual bright eyes were red, little veins visible even from a distance. His face was too pale, dark circles strong under his eyes. Kagami blinked at his voice, slightly backing away as he saw Aomine come forward.

“We need to talk, Kagami,” he said slowly. The redhead said nothing in return, continuing to back away from Aomine. No, no way in hell he’ll let Kagami escape. Even if he had to wrestle him to the ground. “It’s important.”

“No, it’s not. And we don’t need to!” Kagami snapped, his voice sounding tired. Was Seirin practicing that hard?

“Listen, you-,” Aomine stopped himself before he could do any damage. “We need to sort this out properly.”

“Are you even listening to yourself right now, Aomine?” Kagami motioned to him. “You made it clear as a fucking day last time. There’s nothing.”

“Last time, as I recall, I didn’t even say a word to you before you bolted out,” the teen said, his eyebrows furrowing. This was harder than he thought.

“Oh, so you’re just gonna forget Maji Burger now?” Kagami shot back, his hand clutching the strap of his sports bag tighter.

“No, but that was a very bad conversation,” Aomine tried to keep his cool. “I need to make things clear here, Kagami.”

“Bad conversation…” the other teen huffed.

“If you would just *listen* to me-”
“Listen? I don’t need to listen to your nonsense, Aomine! You’ve said plenty already. I don’t care if Kuroko or Momoi or whoever the fuck put you up to this, to make amends or whatever, I don’t want to hear your bullshit!” the redhead raged, throwing a nasty glare at the other standing in front of him already.

“For fuck’s sake,” the bluehead groaned. Fuck being cautious. Kagami was driving him up the wall with his stupidity and Aomine was done being careful. “I don’t give a fuck about whatever nonsense you decided to believe, but you will listen to me, even if I have to force you,” he spat, grabbing the other by his arm tightly.

Kagami tried to pull his arm away, ready to run away (like he always does) but he was exhausted, tired and Aomine was stronger this time. Pulling the other teen to the benches, Aomine celebrated this little victory very briefly. He felt Kagami stop in his tracks. Aomine turned around to find him bending over, his bag dropped to the ground, the other hand clutching his chest tightly. His chest was heaving, the redhead himself choking on the air. Aomine’s eyes went wide with panic, his heart hammering in his own chest.

Without much thinking, Aomine released Kagami’s arm only to wrap his own around the other’s torso, slowly getting the redhead to one of the benches. As soon as Aomine sat him down, Kagami took a big breath, his figure slouched. The teen dropped his head into his hands, his breathing coming back to normal. Only now Aomine noticed a dull pain in his own chest, though it was nothing compared to what Kagami went through just now.

“What the fuck was that?” Aomine asked but his words didn't sound harsh.

“Nothing,” the redhead replied, his head still low.

“That certainly didn’t look like nothing to me, Kagami!” he raised his voice.

“Well, it was nothing to me,” the other teen finally raised his head, tired eyes glaring at Aomine. “Happens every time, nothing unusual,” he said sarcastically.

“What do you mean ‘every time’? Why didn’t you tell anyone? Why didn’t you tell me?” Aomine fumed at the next level idiocy of the idiot in front of him.

“Why the fuck should I tell you?” Kagami’s voice went ice cold. “It’s none of your stupid business.”
“It is my stupid business, you idiot! I can feel it too!” the bluehead was shouting now, the kids on the court looking at the two of them curiously.

“Oh, I’m sorry,” Kagami sneered, “Are you as well crumble to the floor from the unbearable pain?”

“W-what?” Aomine blinked. “No, but-”

“Then don’t you dare say you feel it!” Kagami stood up. They were standing close. Too close to each other. This was a perfect opportunity for the redhead to bolt. He was done with Aomine, done. He just wanted to go home and rest. And never seen the idiot again. Kagami stepped to the side, moving towards his sports bag he dropped until he felt a hand grab him by his shoulder.

“Sit the fuck down, Kagami,” Aomine said, his voice calmer now.

“Don’t fuckin’ tell me what to do, Ahomine,” the redhead spat out.

“What are you, twelve?” the other teen pulled him back onto the bench, pushing him down to sit. Aomine went for Kagami’s bag, bringing it back to the bench, plopping himself next to Kagami.

He was pissed off, scared and concerned. He just experienced something he won’t be able to forget – Kagami almost dying on him. He had no idea the pains were that bad for the other. He knew both of them were having the aches, Midorima already explained that to him, but he could never imagine that the redhead was suffering that much. Aomine didn’t have seizures like this. Why would Kagami have them then? Wasn’t it the whole point of the Bond to make both soulmates feel the same?

“Can you pass me the bottle?” Kagami sighed, pointing a water bottle next to Aomine. With no complaints, the bluehead teen did as asked, carefully studying Kagami as he unscrewed the cap. The redhead threw his head back a bit, his neck stretching as he tipped bottle towards his mouth. The veins and muscles moved as Kagami drank, his Adam’s apple bobbing with each gulp. Aomine caught himself staring, mentally kicking himself. This wasn’t normal. And he needed to stop. Or bleach his brain before more weird thoughts decided to grace him with their presence.

Letting out a content sigh, Kagami toyed with the empty bottle in his hands, awkwardness slowly creeping around them. Did Aomine need to say something now? Force Kagami to have a conversation he’d been meaning to have for the longest time? That didn’t sound like a good idea, especially after what happened. He didn’t need Kagami actually dying on him this time.
“Do you uh,” Aomine began, “want to play?” he jerked his head towards the court that was now empty, no bratty kids hanging around. Kagami’s eyes shot to his, narrowing at Aomine’s idiotic suggestion.

“Do you really think that I can play right now?” the redhead asked with an undertone of disbelief.

“I, uh… I just thought maybe it’ll take your mind off things, no need to be a prick about it,” Aomine huffed, but agreed with Kagami inside. Though, he wouldn’t say it out loud. Kagami, however, seemed to think over the suggestion. “Or are you scared of losing to me? Again,” Aomine smirked. He knew how to push Kagami’s buttons when needed.

Kagami jumped to his feet way too quick for Aomine’s liking (Aomine was not concerned), giving the latter a look of determination. “If you think just because I wheezed a little I can’t kick your ass, you’re wrong.”

“See, that’s exactly what I’m thinking, Bakagami,” Aomine spins the orange ball onto his index finger effortlessly.

“You’re on, Ahomine,” Kagami growls, marching to the middle of the court, dressed in his gakuran.

They both played first to ten baskets, starting out strong. Kagami looked tired but the fire behind his eyes told a different story. He was blocking, rebounding and shooting with passion as if he hadn’t had a proper practice in a while. At some point in the game, Kagami and Aomine took off their blazers, leaving both of themselves in white shirts. Aomine was careful during the game, though he didn’t go too easy on Kagami. Slowly, however, the game dropped the pace and turned into a friendly one. They weren’t dashing through the length of the court anymore. They weren’t trying to block intensely. It was just a pleasant hoop shooting.

And Aomine missed it.

That familiar grin made its way onto Kagami’s pale face, his eyes crinkling at the corners as he stood in a defensive position in front of Aomine. The bluehead could feel himself returning a grin with a hint of smugness. He dribbled the ball, trying to find an opening which Kagami saw through. Making a small step the other way for Aomine, the teen took the chance and threw the ball from a three-point line, making it go in one smooth go.

“Nice one,” he heard Kagami comment as he panted slightly, going for the bouncing ball.
“You shouldn’t let me score so easily,” Aomine bent, resting his palms on his knees.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” the latter grinned, coming at Aomine, the ball already bouncing on the court.

Kagami advanced, bringing a few dribble moves from street basketball, eyes fixed onto Aomine’s. He stepped left and the other teen followed, defense tight. He stepped right, only for Aomine to repeat his movement in milliseconds. Faking, the redhead broke through, taking three large steps, dunking the ball through the hoop. Aomine straightened, looking at Kagami hanging off the hoop with a victorious grin.

“You just can’t go through a game without doing that, can you?” Aomine shook his head, approaching Kagami.

“What, no compliment for my dunk?” the other jumped down, his eyebrow raised.

“You want a compliment?” Aomine looked at Kagami’s slightly flushed face, giving him a healthy glow, toning down the sickly pale.

“It wouldn’t hurt, would it,” Kagami put on a smug look, arms crossed.

“Fine,” Aomine went along. “That was a great dunk, Kagami,” Aomine pushed it out.

“Wow, so much sincerity,” Kagami rolled his eyes.

“That’s all you’re getting, idiot,” he said, dribbling the ball.

“I’ll take what I can get then,” Kagami laughed at Aomine’s sour expression. The bluehead turned his back to the other, letting a smile appear on his face, feeling a little too warm for his liking. He heard Kagami’s laugh stop abruptly, air catching in his lungs.

Turning around briskly, Aomine saw Kagami’s wide eyes, his hand put over his chest, warm light
slightly pulsing through. The redhead’s eyes went down to Aomine’s chest, and the teen followed. The light was blinking in slow, steady bursts, warming him inside. Grasping his shirt, Aomine slowly raised his eyes to meet Kagami’s. Fuck.

Kagami bolted for the benches, snatching his blazer and his sports bag, Aomine hot on his feet.

“Fuck, Kagami, wait!” Aomine yelled out, the redhead already rushing through the gate and disappearing from Aomine’s sight. Groaning out into the sky, Aomine’s hand came to his head, as he paced around in frustration.

He wished the ground would swallow him alive.

Chapter End Notes

*looks into the crystal ball* I see more angst coming.

tfw you try to write but it takes 22456764 years to update.

I'm sorry it took me so long to get this chapter done but on the flip side, it's 5000 words and 11 pages long. And it's 3 am here.

ARE YOU NOT ENTERTAINED?

Hope you are though.

Tags were changed slightly, but nothing major. A lot more swearing though. And a slight scene of almost-fluff. That's always a bonus in my books.

Thanks for sticking around and for all the lovely comments on the previous chapter!

Another update soon*!

-Jynx

*soon - long periolically time.
Kagami wasn't feeling good, but he was feeling a lot better.

One week has passed since another confrontation from Aomine at the basketball court. It seemed like the damn place was cursed. Whenever Kagami went there something would happen, so he decided to avoid the place for the sake of his own health.

It was late Friday afternoon when he got back from the practice. The redhead decided to stay in (like most his free time), declining to go out with the team for food. The pains were still there, especially at night. He was struggling, but the aches have somewhat subdued. He would get a stronger seizing feeling every now and then, though now, it was mostly just low, unpleasant burn that was present. He wanted to believe that he was finally healing. All that time he spent laying on the ground, fighting the pain was being paid off.

Kagami padded to his kitchen. Turning on his TV from a distance and changing the channel to NBA, the teen started pulling out ingredients from his fridge. He enjoyed the peacefulness of his own home, the laziness that he could finally afford. Deciding on Spaghetti Bolognese, Kagami grabbed a pot and put the water to boil. As he did so, he started preparing the rest.

He was working hard during the practice. Since the Bond wasn’t bothering him too much anymore, he could focus more on the training. The Inter High was approaching fast and he needed to put triple the effort as anyone else. He had to be in a tip-top shape if Seirin wanted to have a chance at succeeding this time. Winter Cup was great – it motivated the team, but the Captain was right, too. They had to abandon the thought and work as if they’ve never won.

It was especially difficult this time around. Hyūga announced that Inter High will be the last time the seniors play as a part of Seirin. They were entering the last year of high school in fall and they won’t be able to focus on anything but study Riko said. Kagami could see the sadness flash across the Captain’s face as he forcefully said the words last night after the practice. It was their last chance to emerge as victors as powerful Seirin that they came to be. And the redhead couldn’t let the team down. Kuroko and the rest of freshmen were as determined. It was the last time they had to make their seniors proud.
The boiling water started bubbling violently, bringing Kagami out of his thoughts. Putting the spaghetti in, the teen started up the pan and began to fry the beef. Mixing spices, herbs and veggies made his mouth water as his stomach growled in anticipation. He hadn’t eaten anything yet, and the smells swirling in the kitchen didn’t help.

Kagami let the beef sizzle as he picked up a zucchini, starting to cut half of it into good-sized chunks. Just as the redhead was about to cut into the veggie, the ache seized his heart as a painful burn set his lungs aflame. The knife missed his fingers by a millimeter, skidding across the countertop. Kagami grabbed the material of his t-shirt just above his heart, his eyes watering. Letting out painful breaths, he tried to hold onto the countertop with one hand, pulling himself up.

The pain passed as quickly as it came, only a mild burn still in his lungs. Kagami’s mouth pulled into a side smile. Aomine was probably happily lounging around, feeling nothing at all. That idiot probably wasn’t even aware of what Kagami was going through daily. All the bluehead wanted to do was ‘make amends’ or whatever Kuroko or Momo has set him to do for the sake of Kagami. The redhead had to admit though, Aomine had more determination than necessary to go stalk him to the ends of the Earth if he had to, just to talk. It all sounded ridiculous. Talking couldn’t solve anything.

Taking a deep breath, the redhead tested out his lungs, the pain was gone completely now. He went back to cooking like nothing happened and twenty minutes later, he had a meal steaming on the coffee table in his living room. That was how Kagami went about things – pretending nothing happened and continuing to do whatever he was doing. That was how he managed things now.

Kagami shook his head as if to get rid of any thoughts and changed the channel to ESPN to catch up with the latest news. Inhaling half of his dinner in the first few moments, Kagami could finally relax a little bit.

● ● ●

Aomine missed three more practices.

He just couldn’t focus on anything anymore. His grades were dropping (he wasn’t exactly the academic type, but he was decent), he found it difficult to find any type of interest in basketball practices with the team and even now, dribbling the ball on an empty court wasn’t enjoyable. It was a Friday night, the noise coming from the street – loud and cheerful. The weather was getting
warmer during the nights as well, as the beginning of the summer approached fast. The Inter
High preliminaries were around the corner, but Aomine didn’t feel any joy. He knew he was
supposed to feel something, anything, but he didn’t. The only thing on his mind was the image of
Kagami clutching his chest and doubling over. Aomine let the ball fly from the three-point line, it
swirled on the rim for a bit but eventually went in. Sloppy. He walked up to the still-bouncing ball
picking it up and making his way back to the middle of the court.

To be honest, Aomine didn’t know what to do. With anything. He was just so… tired. He was tired
of the constant ache. He was tired of not being able to spend his time freely without thinking about
how to deal with all of this on his own (since Kagami decided to back out). He was tired of worrying
over the Bond. He did admit that it was sort of his fault that the things turned out this way. But did
Kagami really thought Aomine will be jumping up and down in joy of having a soulmate, let alone
let it be the redhead? It wasn’t like the teen had anything against Kagami (Aomine pretended that he
didn’t have a list of things he hates about the Seirin player). They were… cool with each other. But
the fate or whoever the fuck was responsible for this, had to go ahead and just mess everything up.

Aomine threw the basketball again. It hit the backboard and went through the hoop, grazing the rim.
Letting out a tsk of annoyance, he chucked the ball across the court with all of his strength, stomping
to the benches and plopping himself down. Throwing his head back with a groan, he closed his eyes.
Aomine had to admit that the game was not the same without Kagami. Even though the last time the
redhead was kind of annoyed and slightly pissed off, the one-on-one felt… nice. It was going well,
Kagami seemed to forget everything that was happening between them and just enjoy the game and
Aomine’s company. But that damn light made everything go from zero to hundred real quick. And
the worst thing was, Aomine was left standing in the same court again. No one has made Aomine
enjoy playing basketball just for the sake of playing. And he hated it. He hated relying on Kagami to
bring out the excitement in him.

Everything would’ve been just fine if they weren’t Soulmates. They would still be kind of friends,
play ball on Saturdays, rile each other up just because they could, or send texts back and forward
when an NBA game would be on the TV. They had things figured out. Winter Cup changed both of
them in a way, and Aomine was fine with it all. He was fine.

But here he was now, sitting on a bench in an empty court, alone, the heat of the night seeping
through his t-shirt, making it stick uncomfortably to his skin. He saw the whole Seirin team duck into
one of the local ramen places, all roaring and happy an hour ago. He didn’t see Kagami, which made
him worried just a tiny tad bit. He couldn’t shoot a quick text to the latter and ask him to come and
join him. Technically, he could but he knew his text would be left unanswered. Just like the rest of
them.

Aomine tried contacting Kagami a few times after another failed attempt to talk to him. He sent a few
messages until they’ve turned passive-aggressive. Of course, he didn’t get any replies back. Aomine
wanted to ignore the weird feeling of emptiness whenever he checked the one-sided conversation.
He blamed the Bond for it. After all, it did make him feel things he didn’t want to. He also thought
about messaging Tetsu for an update, since he was the only other person who would actually talk to
Aomine. But texting Kuroko would’ve meant that he was concerned. And the bluehead didn’t want that. He didn’t want to be the first one to crack.

Unfortunately, both him and Kagami were the same – they both were hot-headed and stubborn when it came to things like this. Which made Aomine’s a decision even more difficult. On one hand, he needed to talk to Kagami, especially after what happened last time on the court. He saw how bad the other teen looked, how much he appeared to be suffering. It was never Aomine’s intention to make the redhead feel like that. He just wanted to have a proper conversation with him and finally sort things out. Because right now, they both were trying to deal with this on their own. They both thought they knew the solution to this. Kagami was going lengths to avoid Aomine, just trying to wait it out. Counting days until the pain subdued. Aomine was trying to talk things out, wanting to put an end to it all. Whatever that actually meant. Both teens tried to fix it by doing it the way they thought was the best.

Aomine rubbed his face in a tired manner. There was no point in staying on the court any longer. He was irritated and it showed. The bluehead stood up, making his way to the other end of the court. He grabbed the orange ball from the ground. It was getting pretty late and all Aomine wanted to do was go to sleep. Or flick through magazines which had articles with Mai-chan. Either was fine with him.

As soon as Aomine moved forward, the bluehead stopped dead in his tracks, the ball falling to the ground as he clutched his chest, eyes wide. An immense pain shot through his whole body. It hurt. It hurt a lot. His lungs were constricting. They were burning. He was choking on air; his heart was feeling like it was caught in a vice grip. He squatted down, head hung low, eyes squeezed shut. He felt cold and empty. Taking a few slow deep breaths, he tried to calm himself down. It was never this bad. A dull pain would appear now and then. But this, this felt like something that Kagami has described. Just… pain.

Aomine sat down on the ground, his legs wobbly. The pain was still there, but he could think. Letting out a heavy breath, the teen rubbed his chest. It helped a little bit. His mind unwillingly drifted to Kagami. If Aomine was feeling this kind of pain, it only meant that Kagami was going through this as well. The Bond, it connected their souls, their senses in a way. It mirrored them. The bluehead stood up, his legs a little bit unstable. The ball left forgotten as Aomine headed out of the court with a quick step. Kagami, he could handle himself, right? He went through it before; he knew what to. A weird feeling set down in his stomach. He sped up, almost sprinting out of the court.

Instead of turning left and heading back home, the bluehead took a right. He wasn't exactly sure where the other lived. He never visited Kagami before. But there were a few times when Aomine would walk with Kagami to a little convenience store not far from the court to grab drinks or snacks after an intense one-on-one. He remembered the redhead saying that he lived just up the street in an apartment building near the store.

The brightly lit shop on the corner of the street showed up soon enough, and the teen dashed up the
hill. Most of the buildings on the street were different types of stores. Spotting a towering apartment building was easy. The bluehead reached the main door shut tightly in front of him. He didn’t know the code to the door. Of course, he didn't. He never even was here. Pulling out his cell phone from his pocket, he called the only person who would know this.

“Hello, Aomine-kun,” the familiar calm voice spoke from the other side, surrounded by loud chatter. “You are calling quite late.”

“Tetsu, I need you to tell me Kagami’s apartment code,” Aomine rushed out, rubbing his chest in circles. The pain was slowly coming back. He didn’t have much time.

“I don’t think I understand.”

“Listen, I need to get to him fast, okay? I need the door code,” Aomine tsk-ed.

“Aomine-kun, I would advise not to bother Kagami-kun this late in the evening. The past week was rough, he wasn’t feeling... the best. Trying to corner him in his own home would only escalate things more,” Kuroko went on. “If you would give him some time to think over everything, maybe he will-”

“For fuck’s sake, Tetsu!” Aomine growled at the phone, startling an elderly lady walking her dog. She threw a nasty glare towards the teen. But Aomine couldn’t give any fewer fucks. “I have a real strong feeling that he’s having one of those pain attacks and I need you to tell me how to get to him, do you understand?” There was a brief moment of silence after Aomine spoke, making him think that Kuroko hung up before the bluehead even finished talking.

“hash sign, 20915 asterisk,” Kuroko spoke softly. Aomine punched in the code, a beeping sound letting him know that the doors were unlocked.

“Seventh floor, apartment 14,” the other teen spoke before the bluehead could even ask.

“Thanks, Tetsu!” he huffed out as Aomine ran up the stairs. The elevator was not an option here. He was about to hang up, but the Kuroko spoke up again.

“Make sure he’s okay, Aomine-kun,” he could detect a hint of panic in Kuroko’s voice.
“I will.”

The teen reached the floor not quickly enough. Aomine wasted no time and knocked on the door. No one was answering. He knocked louder again.

“Kagami? Are you there?” he called out, his fist banging on the door. He tried to hear any movement inside but there was no sound on the other side. Could it be that he wasn’t home? What if he got the seizures on the subway or somewhere on a secluded street? Nobody would be able to find him. Aomine shook his head. It wasn’t the time to assume the worst. Lifting the mat, the teen found a spare key lying under. Predictable.

“What an idiot,” he muttered, shoving the key inside and opening the door with speed.

The bluehead stepped inside, closing the door behind him. The lights in the apartment were on. Which meant that the other teen was home. Taking his shoes off, Aomine stepped into a joint kitchen and living room area. The TV was on, ESPN news show loudly playing on the screen. The kitchen sink was filled with dishes, a few containers of food left on the countertop, still warm.

“Kagami?” he called out again, carefully. Aomine felt his chest tighten as he made his way further into the apartment. Kagami’s bedroom door was wide open, a dim light casting a soft light onto the room. Aomine walked in and looked around. Posters of basketball players were stuck to the walls, trophies, and photos of young Kagami in America, and Seirin team framed and put on the shelves. Magazines laid messily on the floor around the bed, though the bed was neatly made. Kagami was not in his room.

“Who the fuck are you?!” a booming voice startled the bluehead. He jumped around, his eyes wide. “Aomine?!” Kagami stood inside the room, his hand rubbing the area above his heart in slow circles. One earbud was in his ear, the other in his left hand. No wonder that idiot couldn’t hear anything. Or anyone. His red hair was wet, sticking to his forehead. The droplets were rolling down the side of his face, down his neck, his firm chest, down his toned body, disappearing beneath the white towel which hung low on his hips.

“What the fuck are you doing here?!” Kagami yelled, tightening the towel around his hips, heat rising up to his cheeks. “How did you get in?!” he stomped up to Aomine, eyebrows furrowed in anger, his chest heaving.

“I-uh.. I thought,” Aomine’s brain was struggling. Absentmindedly, he brought a hand to his own
chest, rubbing it as the pain pierced through. He blinked a couple of times, the proximity blocking any surge of information inside his head. He didn’t know what was happening to him. Something was jumping around wildly in his chest, seizing his breath. But it didn’t hurt. It felt… sweet. As if his veins were filled with saccharine, his heart glazing over.

“Get the fuck out, Aomine,” Kagami grabbed him by the collar of his t-shirt, dragging him out of the room with force. “I don’t know why you’re here or how did you get in, but just leave.”

“Hold the fuck up,” the bluehead finally came back from whatever daze he was in, stopping. “Did you not- didn’t you had another seizure?” he looked at Kagami, searching for any sign of physical pain.

“I- it doesn’t matter,” he pulled Aomine towards the living room. “Now, leave.”

“You had one,” the bluehead removed Kagami’s grip from his shoulder, the latter snatching his hand away from Aomine’s.

“I did, so what?” Kagami gave Aomine a cold gaze that spiked through him. “It’s not like it matters to you. Get out.”

“The fuck you mean it doesn’t matter?” the bluehead furrowed his eyebrows. “I felt it, too!”

“Is that why you’re here? Because you felt a little twinge? Or maybe because you feel sorry me, huh?” Kagami crossed his arms over his chest. “Well, guess what, I don’t need your fucking pity, Aomine. I don’t need you to feel bad for me.”

“I don’t-”

“It’s your fault I feel it every day. It’s your fault I can’t sleep at night, or that I have to experience this-this… pain all the time,” the redhead spat, his voice low and sharp. “I don’t give a fuck that you can feel it. I’m the one dealing with it!”

“Kagami, listen-”
“Get out, Aomine. I’m done. I’m completely done with you and with this,” the redhead motioned between their chests. “I’m done with a-”

“Shut the fuck up for just a minute you, idiot!” Aomine yelled, cutting Kagami off. “Just shut up.”

“You have no fucking right to-”

“I have all the fucking right to tell you that. I felt it, okay? I fuckin’ felt it like never before,” Aomine took a step closer with each word until there were mere centimeters between him and the redhead. “Just like you’ve said, it- it hurt. It pierced through my heart like a motherfucking sword. It burned like fire. I- I couldn’t move or breath. I get it. I understand what you’ve been going through.”

“Congratulations.”

Aomine wanted to punch Kagami in the face. Really, really bad.

“I rushed here thinking that… that you might be…”

“I might be what, Aomine? Might be laying on the floor? Gee, that’s so sweet of you,” Kagami rolled his eyes, but kept his gaze somewhere on the wooden floor afterward. Both of their chests started emitting a soft, barely visible light. Aomine felt a tinge of warmth course through his body. He could tell the redhead could feel it, too. His cheeks were flushed lightly, his folded arms pressing closer to his body as if he wanted to block it.

“Don’t be dense, Kagami,” Aomine sighed, backing away a little bit, putting some space between them. “After I saw you collapse on the court… It- I-” the bluehead didn’t know how to say it without it sounding weird. He felt… scared. He was afraid it might happen to him, too. Or it might happen to Kagami again. After all, what he felt that time was a slight ache. But this time, this time it came to him full force. He could only imagine what the redhead had to go through.

Kagami finally lifted his eyes from the floor, looking straight at Aomine. He looked as tired as the last time he saw him, the strong light in the room accentuating the dark circles under his eyes. He looked exhausted, tired from… everything. It’s been weeks since Kagami had a decent night’s sleep. Or didn’t have to be afraid of suddenly losing his breath. His crimson eyes bored into Aomine’s midnight blue ones. He tried to see if the bluehead was lying or playing him. But his eyes looked sincere.
“I felt it so strongly, that I thought it might be way worse for you. That’s why I came here.”

“Stop, Aomine. Just stop.”

“No. You’ve been running away from this for far too long, Kagami,” Aomine sighed, the tiredness catching up to him. “We need to figure this out. You can’t go about your life constantly feeling pain.”

“Wow, thanks for your concern, but I think I’ll pass,” Kagami said coldly, turning away. “You can let yourself out,” he sighed, going back to his bedroom.

Kagami spent the next three hours on his bed. He laid, flipping through the same magazine over and over again, sighing every other minute, restless. Rolling over to his back, the redhead groaned. This was bad. He never expected Aomine to actually break into his apartment just to check if he was alright. That was the complete opposite of what the other teen would do. He could understand if Kuroko would’ve done it. Hell, even Kise seemed like a more logical choice, but not Aomine. Never.

Another groan escaped him, as Kagami dropped the magazine on the ground. He rubbed his eyes in a tired manner, letting out a deep breath. A loud thud coming from his living room made him sit right up. The redhead strained to listen, slowly getting up from his bed and silently sneaking to peek through the ajar door. He couldn’t see much from this angle. Kagami tried to recall if he heard Aomine leave, which was exactly what he told the other to do.

Opening his bedroom door, the teen carefully made his way into the living room. He spotted Aomine immediately, rubbing his knee. The bluehead was sitting on his couch, the coffee table moved slightly. Aomine probably hit it. The marks on the other’s face betrayed that he was asleep on Kagami’s couch.

“Didn’t I tell you to leave?” Kagami called out, his arms folded. Aomine jerked slightly, his eyes finding Kagami in no time.

“Didn’t I tell you we need to figure this out?” he bit back, his voice sounding tired. A loud yawn escaped Aomine as he fell back to the couch, his stomach grumbling in unison.
The redhead tsk-ed in annoyance, heading into his kitchen. It looked exactly like he left it. Aomine wasn’t snooping around. Picking up the packed leftovers (that he especially prepared for tomorrow), he popped one of the containers into the microwave. He could let Aomine speak and see what he had to say. He was already in Kagami’s house, invading his privacy. And he has proved to what lengths he was willing to go just to talk to the redhead. The last thing he needed was having the other teen camping out under his windows.

This couldn’t hurt Kagami, right?

The redhead tsk-ed again, grabbing the heated meal and a fork (he didn’t think Aomine was able to eat spaghetti with a pair of chopsticks). He hesitantly made his way over to the other teen, setting the food down. Aomine gave him a look of uncertainty. But as soon as Kagami sat down on the other end of the couch, which didn’t leave that much space between them anyway, Aomine pounced the meal. Gulping down ridiculous amounts, the bluehead was done in a few minutes’ time, closing his eyes in satisfaction.

“Thanks for the meal,” the teen said lowly, scooting back into the couch. Stretching his arms above his head, Aomine hummed lightly, content.

“Right,” Kagami cleared his throat. His determination to let Aomine say what was on his mind and finally get this over with wavered. He didn’t want to hear the same words again. He didn’t want to go through the same emotional rollercoaster and curse at the fate again. He wanted to believe so much that Aomine wasn’t his Soulmate. A person who was as selfish as he was cold-hearted. It hurt Kagami. It hurt to know that your destined Soulmate hated the idea of Soulmates. It hurt to know that he wouldn’t ever get a second chance at this.

But seeing Aomine panic that time on the court, seeing him burst through the door in a rush, hearing him say that he was worried – it all stopped Kagami from bailing on this again. Maybe, Aomine changed. It was a fool’s hope but it was still a hope.

“So, you’re on my couch, in my damn apartment,” Kagami began again, looking down at his clasped hands. “I—” he sighed, “I’ll hear what you have to say.”

Kagami didn’t hear any movement from his side, so he lifted his gaze only to meet Aomine’s shocked expression. Furrowing his eyebrows, the redhead shifted uncomfortably.

“So, it took me to actually break in to get you talking, huh,” Aomine leaned forward, resting his elbows on his knees, eyes twinkling with humor. “You’re not easy to get, Kagami, I’ll tell you that,” Aomine chuckled unable to believe what was happening. It probably wasn’t the smartest thing to say
out loud, but the bluehead just couldn’t understand how all of this turned out.

“You know what,” the redhead suddenly stood up, “I’ve changed my mind. You can go.”

Before the redhead could leave, Aomine grabbed Kagami’s forearm, pulling him back to sit on the couch with force. This was his one and only chance to finally, finally talk things out. He tried to recall his plan of action that he tried to come up with. Yet, he never actually thought he’ll pass the point of having Kagami stop being an idiot and listen. So, he had nothing.

“Kagami, for the sake of your own sanity, sit your ass down and listen,” Aomine looked straight into Kagami’s fiery gaze that held a hint of fear. The bluehead couldn’t understand why the other teen was like that. He had nothing to be scared of. There was nothing that could harm him more than whatever was happening with the Bond.

Kagami gulped, fixing his gaze on the coffee table in front of him as the warmth of Aomine’s hand on his forearm, pleasantly coursed through his body. He hated how much it affected him and Aomine seemed to be completely immune to any of this. Feeling his chest heat up with a pleasing fire, the redhead retreated his arm, making as much space between him and Aomine as he could.

“Well, then?” Kagami cleared his throat, trying to sound annoyed.

“Oh, right. Right. Okay,” Aomine nodded a few times. “So, uhm. The thing is…” Aomine tried to come up with a decent way to start the conversation. He didn’t plan this far ahead. He literally had no strategy here. He was presented with this chance to clear things up but he just didn’t know how to.

“I don’t have the whole time in the world,” Kagami commented as Aomine failed to come up with a coherent sentence.

“If you would shut up and just let me speak,” the bluehead tsk-ed, clearly regretting his choice of words afterward.

“You came into my home, you pressed me to listen, I’ve been sitting here doing nothing but letting you finally speak! It’s not my damn fault you can’t make a sentence!” the other teen roared, standing up.
“Fuck you, okay! I’m trying here! I don’t know how to say it without making another mess of things! Can’t you give me a damn break?!” Aomine yelled back, his chest heaving.

“It’s not my fuckin’ fault-”

“You know what, it is your fucking fault, Kagami!” Aomine lunged forward, grabbing Kagami’s shoulder tightly to keep him in place. “It's your fucking fault that I constantly worry over this! You think I just fucking walk around every day without a worry on my mind? Well, guess what,” he gripped the redhead tighter. “I worry about this as much as you do, you fucking idiot!”

“Oh, please!” Kagami fumed, ripping his shoulder from the tight grasp. “We’ve been over this already,” he rolled his eyes. “You hate the idea of this and want to ‘pretend it never happened’, right?” the redhead laughed with bitterness. Aomine grabbed his hair. This was going completely wrong!

“It’s not like that! I’m trying to help you here!” he looked at Kagami pleadingly. “Can’t you see that? I’m right here at your place-”

“You broke in! You actually broke into my home!” Kagami threw his hand up in the air. “I was worried, you fuck!” Aomine shouted out, stepping closer to him. Kagami was getting worked up over nothing. The bluehead couldn’t understand why. Why was he acting like that? “I was worried something really bad has happened and you were somewhere alone suffering and no one knew about it!” the teen poured the words out. Aomine’s heart was beating fast. The blood rushed to his ears. He could hear his own pulse beating wildly over the words he said. “I thought-” he breathed in sharply, “I was just worried, okay.”

Kagami’s frame stood frozen in front of Aomine, a few feet away. The bluehead couldn’t read his face. The other teen dropped his gaze to the floor, his arms handing helplessly by his sides.

“Leave, Aomine,” he said just above a whisper.

“What?” the bluehead blinked. Was Kagami being serious right now? Aomine opened up here – he was doing something he never thought he would and Kagami was telling him to leave again?

“Leave,” the redhead repeated it louder.
“Wh- You know what,” Aomine chuckled bitterly, “I’m done. I went out of my way to make you listen but you just fucking can’t do a simple task like that,” he laughed. Kagami could hear the other teen move towards the door. “I’m finally giving you what you’ve wanted all this time, Kagami!” he shouted out in a cheery way, contrasting with the words he was saying. “I’m leaving you alone! I’m done doing this on my own,” with the last words Aomine slammed the front door shut, leaving Kagami to stand in a ringing silence.

For the first time since he was little, Kagami let tears roll down his face.

Chapter End Notes

Yeah, so that happened.

As you can see, I do like keeping my promises and it took me only another four months to update.

Anyways, thank you for sticking around and for leaving lovely comments! I’m more than thrilled to see positive responses in the comment section and reading your thoughts! It definitely gives me more motivation to continue writing!

Hope you liked this chapter as much as I enjoyed writing it. Another update to follow soon-ish.

-Jynx
Chapter Summary

Aomine gets worse and Kagami listens.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Kagami was slowly losing his mind.

It didn’t take him long to try and bury deep down what happened at the apartment as the Inter High finally rolled around. He had to focus on the games and the inhumane practice regime set by Riko was a perfect prescription for Kagami. He had no choice but to focus on the Inter High, instead of drowning himself in the dark place that was his mind. But all that determination to forget threatened to disappear.

The first game of the championships went well enough. Of course, Kagami managed to foul himself four times in the first half. He had to spend the rest of the game on the bench. Hyūga wasn’t too thrilled about it, but the opponent wasn’t too difficult to beat. However, one thing was nagging the redhead the whole time. Aomine wasn’t among the spectators to watch Seirin play. It was an unspoken rule by now – if Seirin (or Kagami) plays, Aomine will always be there to observe. But the blueetten wasn’t there.

The luck was on Kagami’s side that day.

Seirin advanced with speed and became the leaders of Block A quickly. The last game before advancing to the semi-finals was against Block B leaders – Tōō Academy. The Inter High was a brutal place – one loss was a one-way ticket home. And Kagami couldn’t let the team down. As he sat in the locker room with the rest of the team preparing to go out onto the court, everything that went down with Aomine was still haunting his mind like a never-ending nightmare.

Kagami gave Aomine a chance to explain. However, instead of getting a clear answer once and for all, they ended up fighting. It wasn’t anything unusual, they always bickered but that shouldn’t have ended like that. Kagami knew it. He knew he over-reacted, like he always did. He knew that it was on him that Aomine said those things. He provoked him, because… Well, because he was scared. Scared to hear the same words repeated to him. Scared to learn that maybe Aomine changed his mind. Everything the bluehead did since the Maji Burger Incident was try to find Kagami and talk to him. He tried his damn best (breaking into his apartment definitely proved that) and Kagami could see that.
But the redhead was so certain that Aomine didn’t want to do anything with the situation, that he ended up believing it without hearing the actual person out. He was so sure Aomine will say the same thing again, that Kagami felt even more scared when he sensed that something changed the way Aomine approached him. The truth was, Kagami was afraid to hear Aomine say he wanted to try make it work.

“Alright. Listen up!” Hyōga stood up breaking the silence in the locker room. “Last time we faced Tōō in here, we lost. Last time, we were overpowered, helpless and discouraged. But it was last time. Today is now and we’re ready. We proved it with the Winter Cup and we’re going to prove it with the Inter High. So, focus and do your damn best out there!” The Captain roared, firing up the team. “Seirin on three!”

“Seirin!” the rest shouted out, pumping their fists into the air. The team stood up, heading out of the locker room into the main arena for the match. Before Kagami could follow the rest, he felt a hand grasp his forearm. Kuroko gave him a serious look.

“I understand you still have some unsorted issues with Aomine-kun, but please don’t let it get to you. We need you clear-minded, Kagami-kun,” Kuroko whispered, his blue eyes focused. Kagami nodded, not knowing how to response to that. Was he being that obvious? Nodding once, the redhead and his teammate caught up with the rest, entering the stadium.

The stands were filled, people cheering on loudly in the arena. The lights, the spectators, the unknown ending of today’s game – it all made the adrenalin surge through Kagami’s body. He was getting fired up.

Seirin sat down on the bench. Riko was going through the plays one more time, tapping on the small whiteboard with her marker. But Kagami’s eyes wandered off to the Tōō’s side. He saw Wakamatsu telling something to the team, a smaller boy, Sakurai, was nodding as if his life depended on it. A few other unfamiliar faces sat there, too, probably first years, Kagami thought. But the familiar smirk of the idiot wasn’t among them. Kagami sighed. Following the fight they had, Aomine has went back to his old ways, the redhead was sure of it. The other teen probably thought that they weren’t good enough of a challenge and would come in during the second half. That would be a typical ‘Aomine’ move.

Turning his attention back to Riko, Kagami sipped on his water. Kuroko was right; he had to keep his head clear, especially when Aomine showed up. He couldn’t let his personal problems affect the game. He would just have to deal with all of it later.

With a blow of a whistle from the referee both of the teams stepped on the court, determination in
their eyes. Tōō was used to practicing without Aomine, so it didn’t seem to faze them too much when their Ace wasn’t on the court with them.

Kagami and Wakamatsu got into their positions at the centre line, waiting for the tip-off. With another whistle, the orange ball shot up, Kagami’s legs springing his body upwards with power. The ball was in his hands. With determination, Seirin rushed to the opponent’s side of the court, going for a fast play. Two passes and the first points went in with ease. The crowd cheered.

The first half went smoothly for Seirin. They managed to hold a seven-point lead against Tōō, but they knew that the real game began after the half-time. Resting in the locker rooms for a bit, the teams came back to the arena. Just as he sat down, Kagami noticed Momoi-san rushing into the place, her pink hair messy. She walked up to their Couch and Wakamatsu, saying something that Kagami couldn’t catch. Tōō’s Captain slammed an empty water bottle to the ground with anger, Sakurai apologising for no reason. The blonde ran his hand through his hair in an agitated manner. Was Aomine going to be late as always?

Kagami noticed Kuroko gazing at the Tōō’s bench, too. A barely visible frown sat upon his otherwise unreadable face. The redhead was about to ask his teammate if he knew why Wakamatsu reacted the way he did but Riko was already pulling out her whiteboard.

“Kagami, you’re marking number twelve,” he heard the Coach say. “Tōō’s gonna put him to play in this quarter. He’s a first year, but he has similar physique to yours, Kagami. We need you to stop him.”

Kagami nodded silently.

“Kuroko, I’ll need you to mark number nine. He’s known to be a threat. Hyūga, you’re getting Wakamatsu. From what I’ve just witnessed, he will be easily riled up, so use that to get some free-throws and send him to the bench,” she nodded at the Captain. “Everyone else, be ready to jump in at anytime.”

With a shrill noise of the referee’s whistle, Seirin and Tōō went back on the court. Kagami rolled his shoulders, his eyes landing on number twelve. He was a fresh face and the redhead didn't know much about him or his style of play. He was a little bit shorted than Kagami, but had a similar built. He had light brown hair that reflected the lights of the stadium, his ears pierced. The kid had an aura of cockiness that was oozing from him. He wasn’t in any of Tōō’s previous games, so Riko couldn’t tell much about him. He looked over the opponent’s five. He could feel that the team was a bit… unbalanced, compared to the first half. Was it because of what Momoi-san said?
Tōō got the ball first, Wakamatsu passing it to number twelve that Kagami was marking. They were currently in the lead, but one mistake could cost them the championship. The first year was dribbling in front of Kagami. He looked straight at the redhead, a small smirk making its way onto his face.

“So you’re Kagami Taiga, huh?” he said. “Wakamatsu-san talked a lot about you. He said to watch out for you.”

“Really now? And you are…?” Kagami huffed. Was this kid trying to make a small talk in the middle of a match?

“Suzuki Eichi, might as well remember it,” he flashed a set of whites before breaking past Kagami’s defence, shooting forward. Hyūga rushed after him, trying to strengthen the defence line. But the first year was already ahead, scoring the first points of the second half.

“Just because Aomine-san isn’t here, you shouldn’t let your defence down, sempai,” he grinned at the redhead as he jogged past him.

“What the hell was that, Kagami?” Hyūga hissed, as the redhead passed the ball to the Captain. “Didn’t Riko told you to mark him?”

“Won’t happen again, Captain,” Kagami assured.

Izuki had the ball. Taking a few seconds to come to a decision, he passed it to Mitobe who was open. Hyūga managed to lose Wakamatsu somewhere along the way, signalling Mitobe to pass the ball through. Kagami was already positioned under the basket, struggling to hold his position as the kid from before was on strong defence. As the Captain decided to pass the ball to Kuroko for his signature Phantom Shot, Kagami felt an empty space behind him. A flash of shiny brown appeared in front of him in seconds. Kagami saw Suzuki dash across the court with the ball in hands.

The first year had a cocky grin on his face, ready to make an impressive dunk. But before he could sink the ball, however, Kagami was already in front, jumping with an unmatched power, smacking the ball out of the opponent’s hands.

“You should listen to your sempai, when he warns you,” Kagami tsk-ed. “Don't get ahead of yourself, kid.”
The words seemed to throw Suzuki off his high horse as the first year started to actually follow his team’s game plan instead of going solo. However, Kagami didn’t let him slip past anymore. After last few minutes, the whistle marked the end of the third quarter, giving Seirin to hold their lead for another ten minutes of the last quarter. The victory was close.

Plopping onto the bench, Furihata passed Kagami a towel and a bottle of water, patting him on the shoulder for job well done. Throwing the towel onto his head, Kagami chugged down the cool water with greed. They only had one more quarter to go. Tōō was at a loss, their first year filling in for the Ace was loosing his spirit quickly.

Kagami kept on looking back at the entrance door. He hoped Aomine would show up for the last quarter, all smirks, ready to stretch his muscles, or whatever he called it. Yes, Kagami fought with him and yes, he didn’t want to see him, but this was basketball; this was different. Aomine was his rival. He was the person which made Kagami strive for more. The redhead would always look forward to their official matches, because Aomine wouldn’t hold back.

The minutes ticked by and the doors remained closed. Kagami glanced at the Tōō’s bench once more. Momoi-san was sitting on the end closest to Seirin, her gaze fixed on nothing in particular. As if she felt someone look at her, the pink-haired girl turned her head towards Seirin. Kagami saw Kuroko give her a look of question to which she replied with a shake of her head. So, Aomine wasn’t going to show up, then.

The whistle echoed through the cheering arena, making both of the fives stand up and get onto the court for the last ten minutes of the match. Kagami was both disappointed and pissed off. Aomine promised to meet him on the court of the Inter High. He made a promise to beat him. But he didn’t even show up.

Seirin got into their positions. The black jerseys of Tōō moved as soon as the ball reached Izuki’s hands. The only thing their opponents could do now was to try and foul some of the Seirin members to lessen the gap. Five minutes in, Seirin had a lead of fifteen points, Tōō determination burning out. With a minute left to play, Kagami saw Wakamatsu sigh as they came back from their time out. The ball was in Seirin’s hands with fifty-nine seconds on the clock. With such gap the opponents couldn’t do anything but finish the match the way it was. The pace dropped, Tōō wasn’t in a hurry. Seirin scored six points before the ending whistle shrilled. The match was over and Seirin advanced to the semi-finals of the Inter High Championship.

Kagami was still pissed.
Seirin won and that was great, but he couldn’t help but think selfishly. He didn’t get to play against Aomine and he won’t be able to until the Winter Cup approached. And it was all Aomine’s fault.

Sulking like he bit into a lemon (he wasn’t a big fan of them anyways), Kagami left the locker rooms ahead of everyone else. Roaming now empty corridors of the arena, Kagami’s mind wandered to the bluenette. Why did Aomine choose to miss a match like this? He always talked how he couldn’t wait to face Seirin and Kagami on an official court and have a proper match, a clash of two power players. He would always remind that to Kagami when they were having their one-on-one on weekends. It seemed like it was the only thing that motivated Aomine to play and practice.

The idea of both of them standing under the hot arena lights, tiredness tearing at their muscles, bodies drenched in sweat, eyes on fire, made Kagami work double-time during Seirin’s practice. He lived to play against Aomine. And Aomine lived to play against Kagami.

The redhead didn’t even see Kuroko leave the locker rooms before him until he noticed his teammate talking to Momoi-san a few feet in front. Furrowing his eyebrows, the teen approached the two.

“He hasn’t left his room in days now,” Kagami heard the girl sigh as he came closer. “He just hasn’t been feeling well, that’s all. He needs to rest a little bit and he’ll be up on his feet in no time,” Momoi gave Kuroko a small smile.

“I see. Please keep me updated, Momoi-san,” Kuroko nodded. The girl gave another sigh, promising to text Kuroko as soon as she gets any news.

“Oh, Kagamin,” Momoi-san blinked. “Good work out there, you were in a good form today,” she smiled.

“Oh, thanks,” the taller teen scratched the back of his neck in an awkward manner.

“It’s unfortunate that Aomine-kun couldn’t join you on the court.”

“Y-yeah, about that… Momoi-san, do you know why he didn’t show up?”

“He just… isn’t that well, Kagamin,” she looked down to the floor. “He hasn’t been feeling well
“Oh,” Kagami managed to push out. A heavy guilt settled in his stomach. According to the Tōō’s manager, Aomine got so sick, he couldn’t leave the house anymore. He knew Aomine well (to some extent) and he was sure that the bluenette was stronger than that. It couldn’t have been the fight that affected the Bond? Kagami was feeling a lot better, the pains almost disappeared. Aomine couldn’t have fallen ill because of that. It only affected Kagami, right?

But the way Momoi was looking at him made him rethink the whole situation.

“I have to go now,” she motioned to the Tōō team walking out of their locker room. “I’ll see you around, Tetsu-kun, Kagamin,” the girl waved and rushed after her team.

“Kagami-kun,” Kuroko began after Momoi was out of the earshot, “I don’t know what happened exactly, but you need to sort it out. Both of you,” Kuroko clarified. “I let you avoid Aomine-kun, because just like you, I assumed he will only hurt you. That was a mistake on my part.”

“A mistake? What are you talking about, Kuroko?” Kagami furrowed his eyebrows as the two slowly made their way towards the exit.

“That night when Aomine-kun came to your place, he called me. He was scared, Kagami-kun,” Kuroko’s eyes were piercing Kagami’s. “He ran all the way to you because he was scared of you getting hurt.”

“Don’t be ridiculous, he wouldn’t-“

“But he did,” the bluenette interrupted. “And that is what matters the most.”

“Kuroko, I understand that you want to help, but believe me when I say that nothing can be done,” Kagami looked down to the floor as they walked.

“You’re wrong, Kagami-kun, and you know it,” Kuroko retorted.

“Huh?” the redhead blinked at his teammate.
“I know Aomine-kun, and I know how he can get. The things he did were way out of his character. The question is why would he do them if he didn’t care?”

“Because he’s an idiot, Kuroko. You’re reading way into things,” Kagami huffed.

“And you’re reading not enough into things,” Kuroko dropped the comment.

He didn’t want to admit, but Kuroko had a point. Aomine was… well, Aomine. He did things in an Aomine-like way. But lately, he’s been acting differently. Kagami wasn’t paying attention because he was busy dealing with the pain and the Bond all on his own. Or, he thought so.

He truly believed that all Aomine wanted was to tell him straight and clear that they should just forget the Bond and the Soulmates thing and move on. So, Kagami did the next best thing regarding that – assumed what Aomine wanted to say and took matters into his own hands.

“Kagami-kun, you might not have needed Aomine-kun that time, but he still showed up; he still was there,” Kuroko spoke up again as the pair made it out of the arena. “You heard what Momoi-san said, he’s not well. He doesn’t leave his house. He can’t play basketball, and he couldn’t attend the matches. You know how much he always looks forward playing against you. He would have never missed a chance like that.”

Kagami could feel Kuroko’s eyes on him.

“He needs you Kagami-kun,” his friend spoke softly, “now more than ever.”

“Oi, Kuroko! Kagami!” they heard Koganei shout. “Where were you guys? We’re about to head to the ramen place for a celebratory dinner! Hurry up!” sempai waved at the both of them.

“Sorry, sempai,” Kuroko replied as they came closer, giving Kagami a look. “We’re coming along.”

“I-uh,” Kagami stopped, “I actually have to go somewhere, sorry.”
“Huh? Kagami, you can’t miss the team outing,” the Captain jumped in. “We’ve made it this far, we have to celebrate a little.”

“I really can’t, Captain,” he said, backing up. “It’s really important!” Kagami shouted as he broke into a sprint.

“Kagami!” he heard Hyūga shout after him but he had his mind set already.

Reaching the main street, the redhead saw a little grocery store. Greeting the old lady behind the counter, Kagami started picking ingredients for a zosui rice soup. With a bag full of food, the teen paid for the groceries and left the shop. His phone buzzed in his jersey pocket. He pulled it out and unlocked the screen.

From: Kuroko

[8:26 pm]

Togoshi-Koen stop, Shinagawa-ku, Yutakachō, 4 Chome-2

A plastic stone

There’s a key under it

Kagami shot Kuroko quick thanks and made his way to a subway station. Thanking the lucky starts, the redhead jumped into a carriage just in time. He could not believe he was actually doing it. He could still back out; he could easily get off at the next station and head straight back home. It probably would have been easier, but he knew that his heart would still be heavy. So, wanting to finally get everything sorted, he took the chance.

The subway ride made him nervous. Five minutes in, Kagami’s leg was twitching, his hands clasping the plastic grocery bag tightly. Five more minutes and he reached the station. Getting off, he breathed out heavily in hopes to calm himself down. As he emerged from underground, the unfamiliar area greeted him. Pulling out his phone, Kagami put in the address given by Kuroko and hoped that he won’t get jumped.
The walk wasn’t short. After ten minutes, the redhead approached the house Kuroko talked about. It was a small, typical Japanese city house, guarded by a white-stone wall and tall wooden gates. A plaque next to the mailbox read ‘Aomine’, so Kagami knew he was in the right place. Sighing loudly the teen ringed the doorbell. He wasn’t going to break in like the idiot did. However, no one was responding. Pressing the doorbell button few more times, the redhead found the hidden key and unlocked the gates. Slowly making his way through a small front garden, Kagami approached the front door. The lights were off in the house, and Kagami could not see or hear any movement from inside. He could feel his heartbeat loud in his ears, as his throat constricted. If what Momoi-san said was true, could it be that Aomine was… really really sick? Was this the feeling Aomine had when he was going to Kagami’s place?

Trying not to panic, Kagami unlocked the front doors, stepping into a pitch-black house. Taking off his shoes, the redhead softly called out for Aomine. His voice echoed through the empty space, no response whatsoever. Putting down the groceries, he stepped further in, turning on the lights in the corridor, determined to find the bluenette. There were two floors, so Kagami started with the first one. On his left, there was a rather spacious living room. He peeked inside. It looked rather modern, a few things laying around. Just enough to make it feel comfortable. There was also a small archway leading into a kitchen.

Walking down the hallway, the redhead noticed two doors – one on the right side and one across from it. He looked into the room on his left and found that it wasn’t exactly a room. It had a washing machine and a dryer squeezed in, a shelf of various washing powders and detergents neatly stacked on it. A basket full of undone laundry was overflowing, left in front of the machines.

The other room happened to be a guest room. It had a double bed, a medium-sized wardrobe, a full-length mirror and an armchair placed at the very corner of the room. Tsk-ing in annoyance, the redhead slowly and silently climbed up the wooden stairs onto the second floor. This one also had three rooms. Kagami guessed that two of them was another bathroom and Aomine’s parent’s room. Purely guessing, Kagami carefully opened the first door on his right. The lights were off, like everywhere else, but the redhead could still make out a figure laying motionless on a bed. Kagami crept inside, feeling a little awkward, and came close to the bed. He turned on the light on a nightstand, the dim light illuminating Aomine’s face.

Kagami had to admit, he looked like shit. The usually tan skin was now pale, obvious bags under the teen’s eyes betrayed the lack of sleep. He seemed to have trouble breathing properly as each breath he took was big and loud. A thin layer of sweat had formed on his forehead that glistened in the faint light. Kagami leaned in placing his palm on Aomine’s forehead, unable to ignore the feeling of heaviness in his chest. He was burning up, but not to the point where Kagami had to call an ambulance.

Letting out another tsk, the redhead found the bathroom and grabbed a small fresh towel, soaking it in cold water. He placed it on Aomine’s forehead, hoping it would help to bring the fever down a little bit. Leaving Aomine to rest, the teen walked back down the stairs and grabbing the abandoned grocery bag, he made his way into the kitchen. Pulling out the ingredients, Kagami began making the
Aomine was woken up by noises in his house.

His parents could not have come home yet since they still had another two months of travel. They were very laid back when it came to raising their child. As soon as Aomine reached fifteen, his parents took off to explore the world, leaving the teen deal with his life on his own. He didn’t mind it, though. Living alone meant independence and the teen wanted it.

The only person that took care of him was Satsuki.

He felt something damp on his forehead. He took it off, learning that it was a towel. The teen also noticed that the light on his nightstand was turned on. Still heavy with sleep Aomine slowly sat up, rubbing his eyes. The noises kept on coming from downstairs and the teen had enough of it. He left his bedroom and headed down the stairs straight into the kitchen. No way in hell he’ll let Satsuki make comfort food for him. He’ll die.

“Oi, Satsuki,” he groaned, stumbling into the kitchen. “Can you keep it down? My head’s splitting in half with all the noise you’re making. I appreciate the thought of you trying to make something edible, but, really, I—” Aomine stopped mid-sentence, once he realised it wasn’t his annoying best friend busying herself in his kitchen. “K-Kagami?” he spluttered. Yup, he was definitely still hallucinating.

There he was. His broad frame wrapped in an apron, the teen himself standing in front of the stove, boiling something. It was definitely a weird sight to see.

“Yeah… H-Hey,” the redhead rubbed the back of his neck awkwardly.

“What are you doing here? Wait, how did you get in? Who told you where I live? Was it Satsuki? I swear to God if she was the one who set this up, I’ll—”

“Whoa whoa whoa,” Kagami stopped the bluenette. “First of all, you need to calm down and second
of all, you need to sit down. You don’t look too well… well.”

Aomine blinked like an idiot. He still couldn’t grasp the fact that Kagami, the same Kagami that kicked him out of his apartment, the one that told him to get lost, was here, in Aomine’s own home. Remembering, that he was supposed to be still mad at the redhead, Aomine scowled.

“Okay, I’m going back to bed. You can leave now,” the bluenette motioned to the door, turning around. He will give Kagami the same damn treatment the other gave him. No way he was going to forgive the damn idiot that easily.

Ignoring Kagami in his kitchen, Aomine went back up. The teen took a quick shower to wash off all the sweat from the fever he was having. After the fight at Kagami’s apartment, Aomine has fallen sick. He started having pains like Kagami’s, he couldn’t sleep, eat or move. As days went by, it got only worse. Eventually, got went down with a fever that drained all life out of him. Because of it, he had to miss the Inter High matches and the one with Seirin.

He might have been pissed off by Kagami’s attitude but he still was looking forward to their match for semi-finals. But the pains and the fever got so bad, that Aomine had to stay home. Or, more like, couldn’t leave the house. He blamed himself for missing the match. If he hadn’t gone to Kagami’s that time, maybe, the Bond would have sorted itself out.

Aomine tsk-ed, plopping back onto his bed. Getting under the covers, he turned his back to the door. He wanted to know why did Kagami show up, let himself in and started making food. But he was still mad at how things went down. Aomine did say that he has given up on trying to fix this, whatever it was, by himself. He said it and he had to keep to it. But somehow, he just didn’t want to. Kagami was here. He was here now. In his house.

The bluenette sighed.

It was driving him nuts. He wanted to know why the other teen was here badly. But he had his own pride to uphold. This also could be his only chance to get everything out of Kagami. Since, well, he came here voluntarily (or it seemed so to Aomine).

Before Aomine could rip his own hair out because of the internal dilemma he was having, a soft knock on the door brought the teen back to reality. He froze for a moment. He shuffled in his bed instead of saying anything, waiting. He heard his bedroom door open cautiously. He could feel Kagami approach his bed, Aomine’s back to him. The redhead put something on his bedside table but didn’t leave the room yet. And it bothered Aomine.
“What?” the bluenette turned around, pulling himself into a sitting position, getting fed up with Kagami’s presence. He glanced at the other teen, noticing that he was looking down at the floor. “Either say something or leave,” that seemed to bring Kagami to life, as he finally looked at Aomine.

“What didn’t you show up?”

Aomine furrowed his eyebrows. Showed up where?

“To the match, I mean,” the redhead corrected himself.

“Are you serious right now?” Aomine raised his eyebrow. He just could not deal with this level of stupid right now. “I don’t know if you’ve noticed, but I look like death chewed me and spat back out.”

“No, I see that,” Kagami’s eyes focused somewhere on Aomine’s bed.

“Then why did you ask? The answer is pretty clear.”

“But why didn’t you show up?” the teen kept on pressing.

“Kagami, you’re absolutely-”

“I mean, you promised. You promised to beat me in an official match. You said you’ll be there. And you weren’t. Now we won’t be able to play until the Winter Cup,” Kagami cut him off. Aomine knew exactly what the redhead meant. It might have sounded weird for anyone else, but Aomine understood. “We both trained, for so long. I was looking forward to it, but you weren’t there. Your team was unbalanced. I didn’t enjoy playing today at all.”

“Listen, Kagami,” Aomine rubbed his face in a tired manner. “I wanted to, okay? I know I promised and all, but do you really think I could have played with the condition I’m in? Like, look at me,” he motioned to himself. “I can barely stand. It would’ve been a disaster either way,” he shrugged. “I don’t need to ask if you won.”
He saw Kagami roll his eyes at that. Of course, Seirin won. They were strong, Kagami was strong. And knowing how upset Wakamatsu was once he earned that Aomine couldn’t be there, it only made Seirin take advantage of that and run with it. He didn’t feel angry that Tōō lost. He felt angry with himself that he couldn’t play.

“You should eat that. Before it get’s cold,” Kagami motioned to the soup on the bedside table awkwardly. Wordlessly, Aomine reached for the steaming bowl. It was rice soup with veggies, made for the ones that were sick. The bluenette thought it was a nice gesture, even if it felt really awkward and unnatural. Slurping the goodness that was the soup, Aomine couldn’t help but think that Kagami was here because he was worried about Aomine. Just like Aomine was worried about Kagami last time. Him not showing up to the match looked like an apocalypse for Kagami. He probably thought that the situation was really bad.

It was pretty grim, but Aomine wasn’t dying.

“Can you like, sit down or something? This is getting pretty awkward,” Aomine looked at Kagami as he ate.

“Sorry,” the redhead mumbled, looking around the room.

“Kagami, sit on the bed for Christ’s sake,” Aomine rolled his eyes. This was getting ridiculous. The redhead sat down carefully at the end of the bed, his head lowered, his arms resting in his knees.

“As I understand, you didn’t come here to blame me for not showing up,” Aomine spoke up again, putting the now empty bowl of soup away. Kagami shifted. “Well, go on then. I’m listening.”

Kagami stayed silent for a while. Aomine could see him gathering his thoughts, rethinking and rehearsing what he was about to say. As eager as Aomine was, he kept silent, observing the guy sitting at the end of his bed. He was his only chance to lay the facts down and finally figure out how to make any of this work.

“I’m sorry,” Kagami spoke barely above the whisper.

Aomine was surely not expecting that. The bluenette blinked twice, thinking if he heard it correctly. Was Kagami… apologising? Was that an apology?
“I’m sorry the way I acted back at the apartment. I was… weirded out, I guess?” Kagami made it sound more like a question. Aomine’s eyebrow raised. “Wait, that sound’s bad. More like shocked by the bizarre situation.”

“You mean as bizarre as you showing up to my house, breaking in, putting a damp towel on my forehead and then making me comfort food?” Aomine teased the redhead. He saw the other’s cheeks go aflame, the red matching his hair. As if on cue, the faint lights started to pulse slowly in both of their chests, the warmth surging through – something that Aomine has forgot how it felt. It was pleasant and calming. And it did make him feel a bit better.

Kagami, on the other hand, looked like he was pushed into a volcano. Not only his cheeks but his whole face was red – to the tips of his ears, his eyes were cast down as he tried to ignore the pulsing light with all his strength.

“Would have never taken you for a romantic, Kagami,” Aomine let a small smirk settle onto his face. If he wasn’t enjoying teasing Kagami that much, he probably would be looking like the other teen by now.

“I’m not a-” Kagami’s eyes snapped to Aomine’s face, forked eyebrows furrowed.

“You’re stuttering,” Aomine’s smirk grew wider.

“S-Shut up! It happens when I’m nervous-, I mean-” Kagami was making a mess out of himself and it entertained Aomine beyond anything else. “God, this is getting worse,” he muttered to himself. “I’m not a sap or whatever, I just… I don’t know anymore,” the redhead threw his head back, staring at the ceiling.

“Then why are you here, Kagami?” Aomine decided to just bite the bullet. He needed answers. The bluenette saw Kagami freeze for a moment. The look on his face looked like he was anticipating this question all along; like he needed the confrontation to finally figure it all out.

“I don’t know,” he whispered.

“That’s not good enough.”

“Then why were you at my apartment?” Kagami straightened out, looking directly at Aomine with
those fiery eyes. There was so much uncertainty behind them, so much fear.

“Because I wanted it to be finally over,” Aomine sighed. He knew he had to be truthful if he wanted Kagami to do the same. Maybe opening up wasn’t as bad as Aomine thought initially. “Well, firstly, I was kind of scared that the pain was unbearable for you. That shit you pulled on me at the court really freaked me out,” the teen remembered. “But once I saw you looking okay, I wanted to clear things up.”

“I think you were pretty clear on that the first time we talked about it,” Kagami murmured, his eyes still on Aomine.

“See, that’s the problem. You’re not letting me explain anything here.”

“No, that’s not the problem,” Kagami bit back.

“Then why are you not letting me talk? If that’s not the problem, why can’t I even mention it?” Aomine asked calmly. He had to keep his head straight, even if Kagami was testing him right now. “The moment I bring it up, you get defensive, aggressive and storm off.”

“Because I’m scared, okay!” Kagami roared. “If you were in my shoes, you would understand that!”

“Why would you be scared? It’s not like I’m, I don’t know, forcing anything on you.”

“How should I know that? Did you just magically forget what you said to me at Maji’s?” Kagami rolled his eyes. “How should I know that you-” the redhead stopped himself.

“Jesus, Kagami, just spit it out already,” Aomine couldn’t hold back anymore. He was tired, confused and his patience was running thin.

“I was afraid you would just say the same thing to my face, asshole! You don’t know what I think about Soulmates, you don’t understand why it’s important to me. I got hurt once, I didn’t want you coming and shoving the same thing into my face!” he raged. “I know you don’t care about it and want to do nothing with it, and it fucking hurt me that you had to be my Soulmate!” the redhead suddenly stood up. Aomine was taken aback by what Kagami said. And it truly showed on his face, because the next thing Kagami did was panic. “That’s not what I meant,” the redhead said carefully, sitting back down.
“No, no,” Aomine shook his head, a tiny waver of pain evident in his voice. “I get it.”

It sort of hurt. Hurt to hear that Kagami didn’t really want to do anything with Aomine, apart from practice basketball. The bluehead didn’t want to admit it, but he thought of Kagami as his friend. Almost. Sort of. They didn’t hang much apart from their usual one-on-one or going to Maji Burger afterwards, but he felt comfortable and relaxed around Kagami. But hearing the other teen say that he regretted having Aomine as his soulmate was… unpleasant. The bluenette knew he came off as arrogant and at times too cocky for his own good. And he understood why Kagami would think like that since he kind of made it obvious that Soulmates wasn’t a huge deal for him.

“I just… you looked like you hated the idea,” Kagami shrugged. “And I always heard these stories about meeting your Soulmate, how wonderful it was, how happy the person felt. My parents are soulmates and they have probably the most beautiful life of them all, and I always wanted that,” he sighed. “So, you can imagine how I felt and what I thought when I discovered it was you, and what you thought, no offence.”

“None taken,” Aomine shrugged himself.

“And then, after you know, the Maji Incident,” Kagami glanced at Aomine quickly.

“You named it ‘Maji Incident’?” a small smile made his way onto Aomine’s face.

“Don’t you start,” Kagami warned the bluenette.

“Sorry, sorry,” Aomine chuckled lightly. “I’m listening.”

“Anyways, after that, when I saw you trying to talk to me again, it kind of made sense to me that you just wanted to reconfirm what you said before, so I avoided you. I mean, I already knew you wanted to forget it, so I didn’t want to hear it twice. I thought that maybe if we both stayed away it would just… figure itself out, or something.”

“Sounds… fair,” Aomine nodded. It did make sense. And Aomine could see why Kagami did what he did. But that still didn’t explain what happened in the apartment. “But what about last time? You did sort of give me a chance to talk, but…”
“Yeah, about that…” Kagami rubbed the back of his neck, embarrassed. “I kind of finally decided that if I let you say whatever you had to say, you would just let me be in peace, so I gave it a shot,” he cast his eyes down to his hands that were resting on his knees. “But, you seemed… different. I mean, you broke into my apartment. And it threw me off. I was afraid that you actually changed your mind, and in my head, that was even worse.”

“What’s wrong with that?” Aomine asked softly.

He spent those days laying awake at night thinking. He thought about everything that happened, how it happened. Aomine spent so much time with himself that he couldn’t escape thinking about how he truly felt. Yes, he wanted to make things clear with Kagami (and he partially blamed the Bond for it; made him do crazy stuff). But the idea didn’t sound that bad. They had things in common, they did get along pretty well, even if their (sort of) friendship was based on a lot of bickering. As weird as it sounded coming from Aomine, being Soulmates with Kagami didn’t sound that bad at all. He even went as far as thinking about them going on dates and…doing more, which made his cheeks turn red as the other teen’s hair and his heart leap to his throat (that night Aomine had to flip through every Mai-chan magazine he owned to try and gain his sanity back). And that was the last time he even dared to let his mind wander off like that.

Aomine realised that Kagami never started talking again after the bluenette murmured the last question. Kagami was never meant to hear it. Lifting his eyes that were focused on his duvet, he saw the redhead staring at him like he grew two heads. Kagami’s face was flushed again, the heat picking up in both of their chests. Aomine was sure, he just blew it up.

“W-What did you say?” Kagami stammered.


“No no no, y-you just said that-” Kagami cut himself off, his voice rising in pitch.

“I said nothing, Kagami.”

“Oh, you said something alright,” the redhead wasn’t playing around.

“I said, what’s wrong with me changing my mind!” Aomine rushed it out, embarrassed beyond belief. He wasn’t ready for this. Kagami just blinked at the other teen’s words.
“You… think… it’s not… bad to be… Soulmates… with me?” Kagami looked like his brain shut down.

“It doesn’t sound bad, no,” Aomine shook his head. “To be honest, I was never against the idea per se,” he started slowly. “I was just shocked, y’know. I was never much into these things, it was Satsuki’s job to be obsessed with the sappy stuff,” he shrugged. “No offence,” he added smirking, remembering that Kagami was definitely into sappy stuff like this. “So I never even bothered thinking ‘what if’. But then it happened so suddenly I just wasn’t able to comprehend the situation and said what I said. Which, I admit, was pretty stupid. I just assumed you were on the same page as me, since we’re kind of similar?” he didn’t dare to look at Kagami and started picking at his duvet.

“What changed then? It looked like you really didn't want it to happen, at least it looked like it to me,” Kagami questioned.

“I don’t really know what or why it changed,” Aomine sighed, trying to think. “I mean we are friends, right?”

“I guess,” Kagami shrugged.

“You guess?” Aomine raised his eyes to look at Kagami.

“We didn't really hang out much, Aomine.”

“Yeah, but we played basketball? And went to Maji’s? And you would text me full NBA games’ summaries, for fuck’s sake.”

“Yeah, okay, we’re friends,” Kagami rolled his eyes with a hint of playfulness.

“Right. So, it was just weird to think of you as anything else, I guess. But… I think it really shifted when you almost died on the court that one time. Shit, I was never this scared in my entire life. And then you brushed it off like it was nothing!”

“I didn't die, Aomine. I had a mild seizure.”
"You call *that* mild?"

"It was one of the lesser ones, yes."

"You're unbelievable."

"If I would, we wouldn't have advanced to the semis," the redhead smirked. Now, this was something more familiar to Aomine.

"How was it, by the way?" the bluenette asked.

"It was alright. They let this first-year play instead of you. Cocky as hell. I guess that is what happens when you play as a Tōō’s Power Forward," Kagami grinned.

"Oi, you play the same position, don’t talk shit, Bakagami," Aomine tsk-ed. "Anyway, I would suggest watching an NBA game, but I don’t have that, so yeah," the bluehead cleared his throat, trying to be nicer to Kagami.

"It’s cool. You need to rest anyways. And I need to go, too," the teen stood up. "The leftover soup is in the fridge. But I suggest finishing it tomorrow, ‘cause rice will get too soggy."

"Yeah yeah," Aomine waved his hand in the air. "Thanks," he added, coughing.

"Sure," he nodded a bit awkwardly. "I’ll let myself out. See ya."

"Just get out, Kagami," Aomine groaned, earning a chuckle for the redhead.

*What an idiot.*

Chapter End Notes
Well!

There you go! I love cliffhangers, but this time I thought to just go through with it. Hopefully, 7.5k words are enough to make up for it!
Angsty stuff's done, time for awkwardness!

Oh, and Aomine's address is a random place in Tokyo that I just clicked on Google Maps.

As always, All your comments are much appreciated and thank you for the support!

-Jynx
Half-Time

Chapter Summary

Aomine sucks at video games and Kagami tries to help.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Aomine didn't see Kagami for another two weeks.

Kuroko told him a while ago that with the last win their coach was determined to squeeze the life out of Seirin's team with her crazy practice regime. Kuroko also added that it probably wasn't legal. This meant Kagami was stuck practicing and couldn't do anything else but concentrate on the Inter High. It was not like Aomine cared much, but he felt like some things still left unsolved. It seemed like both of them where on more civil terms now, yet, there was still awkward tension surrounding the two.

So, here Aomine was, standing outside an arena where Seirin was playing Josei High. The first half of the match was nearing to the end, and yet he was standing here. The summer was nearly here and the humid heat surrounded Aomine like a blanket, threatening to choke him. The teen paced back and forth in front of the building a few times, unsettled. He just couldn't bring himself to enter the arena.

He tsk-ed in annoyance. As he found a more secluded area further away from the entrance, he unceremoniously plopped down onto the stairs. His black sleeveless t-shirt was sticking to his tanned skin, beads of sweat forming above his brow.

He closed his eyes, letting out a deep sigh. He didn't know why exactly he couldn't watch the match. It might've been because he missed out on playing the games, and watching other teams play made him fidgety. Aomine wanted to be on the court, run across the parquet, feel the adrenaline and excitement rush through his veins. And to see Kagami run around, push himself until he couldn't feel anything else, would've made the bluehead feel a bit jealous. He wished he could've joined Kagami when Seirin played against Tōō.

It could have also been the weird situation he and Kagami were in at the moment. The bluenette was restless. He needed to make sure Kagami and him were on the same level - no more random bursts of anger, pain or running away. Aomine needed to make sure they were back to normal. Or, as normal as they could. The problem was, as always, he couldn't figure out how to approach such situation. Aomine just didn't know how to act, whenever he found himself stuck in a complication with Kagami. He feared of ruining all of what has been rebuilt. He didn't want to wing it. Last time it didn't work out that well.

"Aomine?"

The bluehead opened his eyes. Struggling to focus in the sudden strong light, the tall figure shuffled awkwardly and Aomine knew that it was none other than Kagami.

"Y-yeah, hey," the bluenette rubbed the back of his head.
"What are you doing here?" Kagami questioned.

"What do you mean 'what I am doing here'? I came to watch the game, idiot," Aomine tsk-ed, closing his eyes again.
"You missed the first half," the other teen stated. "I didn't see you in the stands."

Aomine kept his eyes shut, sensing a weird feeling enwrapping his body. Was Kagami waiting for him to show up? His heart picked up the pace, as Aomine cleared his throat, not knowing how to respond to that or what to say next.

"You look good," Aomine spoke up, regretting the words that left his mouth immediately. Kagami's eyes found the ground, the tips of his ears heating up. Both of their chests started emitting a soft glow, making the situation even more awkward that it had to be. "Y-your form, I mean," he cleared his throat. "It looks good. Solid."

"T-thanks," Kagami stuttered, eyes still fixed onto the ground.

Aomine didn't know what to do next. The conversation was not going anywhere anyways and the stupid glow of their chests was slowly getting to the bluehead. The last thing he wanted was to have the most awkward conversation in the world, accompanied by the inevitable embarrassment.

"It's the game, right?" Kagami spoke up, and Aomine felt him sit down next to him. "You'll get restless if you watch the game. You'd be wanting to be out there, sprinting across the court."

"Yeah," Aomine admitted. "Pretty shit feeling, if you ask me," he chuckled lightly, giving Kagami a quick glance. "But seeing you play would be pretty exciting," he added. Kagami's face started to burn and Aomine had to rethink his wording. Could he have been any more awkward?

"I do put on a good show, if I have to be honest," Kagami shrugged nonchalantly, breaking into a wide smile afterwards. It was the way the redhead tried to hide his uncomfortableness, Aomine thought.

"Wow, okay," Aomine rolled his eyes, looking somewhere ahead.

"Sorry," Kagami let a small laugh, and Aomine's chest seized at the sound of it. Shit. "I was gonna ask you to an one-on-one last Saturday, but Kuroko told me that Momoi-san told him that you're still too weak to play properly."

"I cannot believe you just said the 'w' word," the bluenette huffed.

"What? 'Weak'?" Kagami looked puzzled. "Aomine, there's nothing wrong in admitting you need some recovery time."

"I don't need no recovery time, thanks."

"That's a double negative."

"Shut up."

"You're as stubborn as ever."

"I could still score more than you even if I was bed-ridden," Aomine challenged Kagami.

"Not even a minute ago you told me I was 'looking good' and now you're putting me down, what a great friend you are, really."
"Can you really blame me? I'm just trying to look out for you, can't let all that admiration get to your head," Aomine shrugged.

"Well, this surely is an interesting development," a too-familiar voice reached both of the teens, surprising them. "Do make a note of this, Midorima."

"Already done, Akashi."

"Very well. Aomine, Kagami, nice to see you. Both are well, I presume?"

"Define 'well'," Aomine mutters rubbing his chest unconsciously.

"Well, the actual definition of the adjective, in this case, would be 'in good health; free or recovered from illness'. It could also mean 'in a satisfactory state or position'. I would go with the latter, however. Would fit current situation the best." Midorima fixed his glasses.

"Gee, thanks," Aomine rolled his eyes.

"Yes, thank you Midorima. Rather informative," Akashi nodded, completely ignoring Aomine's jab at the green-haired shooting guard. "It is quite opportune to have both of you here. I do understand Midorima passed on my message, Aomine."

"If he did, I don't remember. I tend to tune him out most of the time," the other teen shrugged, earning a slight chuckle from Kagami next to him.

"Unfortunately, Aomine, I do not recall you tuning me out when you begged me to help you with the soulmate situation," the shooting guard adjusted his glasses again, somewhat sinister aura surrounding him.

"I did not ask you for help. Satsuki decided to involve everyone and make a huge deal out of it."

"Yes, because it wasn't a huge deal, just typical idiocy of Aomine Daiki," Midorima retorted.

"Oi, you son of a-"

"That's quite enough," Akashi's voice echoed loudly. "I simply wanted to ask about your state of the situation, that's all."

"Fixed," Aomine huffed, getting tired of the interrogation. Akashi was the last person on earth he wanted to see or talk with right now. He could feel Kagami tense up next to him, slightly uneasy with the conversation.

"Now, now, Daiki, would it not be easier to respond with a little bit more respect for your ex-captain?" the bluenette saw a glint of gold flash past Akashi's eye, only for a brief moment.

"Listen, Akashi, I appreciate the concern, but right now, the situation is alright. As you can see yourself."

"Indeed I can."

"There."

"Alright, I shall ask Midorima to keep me informed of any changes. Goodbye for now, Aomine, Kagami," Rakuzan's captain nodded turning on his heel and starting to walk away in a way too regal posture. Midorima shot Aomine a firm nod and followed after Akashi straight into the arena.
"What the hell was that all about?" Kagami asked as the two of them were left in the hallway alone.

"Nothing, trust me," Aomine sighed, throwing his head back.

"Yeah, if Akashi's involved, it's definitely nothing," the redhead snorted but didn't push it any further.

"I think I need to go back, the half-time's almost over," Kagami stood up, dusting off the back of his thighs. Both of their chests were glowing, the comfortable warmth spreading throughout.

"Yeah," Aomine cleared his throat, well aware of the shared warmth between them. "I'll head in then soon, too. See you later, I guess?"

"Yeah, alright," the redhead nodded, his gaze fixed onto Aomine. Kagami started to move towards the arena but turned around to face the other teen.

"Hey, since you, you know, can't play on Saturday, maybe we could just hand out at my place? Y'know watch a game on TV, order in…or something like that," the redhead coughed out the last part as if choking on his own words.

Aomine's brain sort of… shut itself down for a moment. He was looking straight at Kagami, expression unreadable, body - unmoving.

"…or not. You know, it was a stupid idea, you're probably need some more rest, forget I asked," Kagami mumbled out quickly, embarrassed.

"No, actually, that sounds pretty good. I've been cooped up in my room for the past two weeks," the bluenette blinked, managing to say a few sentences.

"Oh," Kagami's eyes widened, as the tips of his ears reddened. "Cool then. Saturday it is, then. Cool," he nodded. "I really gotta go, though," he jerked his head towards the arena.

"Yeah, go ahead."

"You know where I live!" Kagami shouted out the last part as he sprinted up the stairs and disappeared inside the building.

Shoving his hands into his capris shorts' pockets, Tōō's ace let out a deep sigh, throwing his head back. Fixating his eyes onto the sky above, the only thing Aomine could focus on was the warmth that settled within his chest.

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Saturday could have not come sooner for Kagami.

The rest of the week flew by. The Inter High games and tiring practices took up most of Kagami's time, and soon, he found himself waking up on Saturday morning. Sitting up straight, he let out a loud yawn, stretching. His muscles burned with pain, and the teen groaned out. His body felt stiff and he hated the feeling of it.

Getting out of the bed, Kagami wasted no time and headed straight for the bathroom. He turned the shower on, waiting for the water to heat up. As he did so, he looked at his reflection in the bathroom's mirror. He looked tired, yes, but he also looked healthier. Way more than before. It was all thanks to the situation with Aomine being sorted out. Kagami felt happy to know that they were back to being friends of sort. He was a little sad that Aomine was not feeling well enough to play. After all, having their usual one-on-one was what Kagami always looked forward to. He had hopes,
though. Soon, Aomine will feel better and they will be able to hang out on the court.

Kagami stared at himself until the mirror fogged up completely and the redhead took off his t-shirt and boxers, and stepped under the scorching water. He let out another groan, feeling an immense bliss of his muscles relaxing under the cascade. He grabbed a strawberry scented shower gel (it was his favourite, but he kept it a secret) and put the suds all over his body. Just as he was to take another good five minutes to stand under the water, he heard his doorbell ring. Cursing, he left the wonderfulness of the hot shower, wrapped a towel around his waist and went to answer the door.

He did message Aomine yesterday saying to come whenever, but it was only around lunch, and he wasn't expecting him to show up that early. The doorbell rang one more time, and Kagami rushed to unlock the door. Opening it, he was greeted with Aomine looking around the corridor.

"Aomine? What are you doing here?" Kagami asked, a slight déjà vu kicking in.

"Huh?" Aomine blinked, clearly not looking at Kagami's face, but rather his half-naked body.

"Well, come in then," he urged the other teen, not wanting the heat from outside to spread through his perfectly cool apartment. Aomine cleared his throat and quickly stepped inside.

"Why is it whenever I come here, you're always half-naked?" the bluenette commented, taking his shoes off.

"You've been here once," Kagami retorted, tightening the towel around his waist, feeling way too exposed. "I thought you'll be coming in later."

"Oh, there's a game I wanted to watch live. It starts in about ten minutes. So, I thought I'll use your NBA subscription to watch it," he shrugged.

"I can't believe you're using my good heart," the redhead commented before heading back to his bedroom to put something on. He opted for a simple white t-shirt and basketball shorts.

As Kagami came back, he found Aomine already lounging on his couch, the remote in his hands. Leaving the other teen in his living room for a moment, Kagami went into the kitchen to grab a family-sized box of cereal. With that in his hand, he joined Aomine on the couch. As they both waited for the game to begin, the redhead started scooping the cereal into his hand, shoving it straight into his mouth.

"No milk?" Aomine gave him a weird look.

"Nah," the redhead replied, his mouth stuffed like a chipmunk's.

"Barbaric," the other teen commented, bringing his attention back to the screen, as the teams lined up.

"That's a very big word for you," Kagami smirked.

"Fuck off."

It felt… good. It felt good to be able to throw words back and forward with Aomine, knowing it was playful. Kagami definitely missed being able to insult each other like that. Not that he would ever admit that to anyone. But for the first time since that unfortunate Bonding on the court, it felt like everything was finally falling back into their place.

The two of them spend a few hours watching the game between Toronto "Raptors" and Sacramento
"Kings". Both of them threw comments and jabs to the players on the screen, enjoying each other's company like that. Kagami also translated a few things for Aomine, if he asked about what the commentators were saying. Somewhere closer to the end of the last quarter, Kagami ordered a takeaway. The game ended before the food arrived, so Kagami let the post-game comments run in the background as they waited.

"I'm not surprised "Raptors" won. I mean, the second half was just... ugh," Aomine leaned back into the couch. "Are there any more games today?"

"No, not that I know of," Kagami replied, getting up to collect the food as the bell rang. He came back into the living room with to plastic bags with Chinese takeaway, setting on the glass coffee table.

"What should we do then?" the bluenette asked, grabbing one of the bags and digging into the food the next second.

"I've got "NBA 2k18" if you want to play?" Kagami mumbled back, stuffing the rice.

"Sure. Another opportunity to kick your ass on a virtual court," Aomine grinned.

"Yeah, I highly doubt that."

"We'll see."

As soon as they both finished the meal, Kagami went to plug his gaming console in and put the game on. He passed Aomine a controller. Plopping next to him on the couch, he saw the bluenette checking it out. It seemed like he didn't know what to do with all the buttons on the piece of plastic.

"Are you sure you know what you're doing?" Kagami asked curiously. He has been playing video games for years, but it seemed that it might have been Aomine's first encounter with the gaming system.

"Of course, I'm no idiot," he huffed, gripping the controller in both of his hands. "Just start the game, Bakagami."

"Sure," Kagami shrugged.

The redhead destroyed Aomine in the first match, as the other teen's mouth hung open in disbelief. He was fumbling with the controller the whole time, trying to figure out the actions and combos, unsuccessfully so.

"If you ask nicely, I might teach you," Kagami smirked, his eyes on the screen. Aomine asked for a rematch instantly, and Kagami did not oppose.

"Fuck no, I'm doing fine."

"You can't even block me, how is that doing fine?"

"It's my tactic, don't question it."

"Alright," Kagami chuckled. He went on to win the second game, leaving Aomine frustrated. The bluenette didn't miss a beat and demanded another match. Three games later, Aomine gave in and asked Kagami to explain the basics to him. Kagami knew it hurt the bluenette's pride. And Kagami basked in that fact.
"So, if you go like this, you can just steal the ball like that," the redhead scooched closer to Aomine, showing him the moves on his controller and they started another game. "Now, you try it."

"Okay, that's good," Kagami commented when Aomine successfully copied his movements. "If you wanna block, just go like this," he went on as the other teen followed his hands. "And then you do an assist and score. Simple."

Kagami gave tips and advice to Aomine on how to do basic things a bit better and watched proudly as Aomine managed to get it all memorised pretty quick. They had a few more games and Aomine preformed ten times better each time. Eventually, Kagami had to really focus on the game because of Aomine. He felt a grin spread across his face and they both played a great game. Even if it was a virtual one.

"Why is it so hot in here?" Aomine growled, pressing the buttons on the controller violently.

"It's because I'm kicking your ass," Kagami commented, skilfully making an assist and dunking the ball over one of Aomine's players.

"No, seriously," Aomine groaned, "it's like a sauna in here," he wiped the sweat forming on his forehead off. Kagami started to feel overheated as well and, as much as he didn't want to lose the game, he glanced quickly at his air con. The LED display was flashing red, no cold coming through.

"Oh, fuck," he cursed, jumping to his feet, the game forgotten. He went closer to inspect. The blinking symbols didn't tell anything to him.

"Just get the manual," Aomine commented. He wasn't playing the game anymore. He was sprawled onto the wooden floor, trying to absorb as much coolness as he could.

"Yeah, okay," Kagami agreed. He started to rummage through different drawers in the living room, finding multiple piles of papers. "Will you help me?"

"I'm currently melting, I don't think I can," Aomine wheezed out, taking a large gulp of the humid air.

"If you won't help me, you'll melt quicker," Kagami tsk-ed, looking through each paper. He heard Aomine pick himself up from the floor and come up behind Kagami. "Look in the kitchen," the redhead pointed towards the area.

"Yes, sir," the bluenette mumbled, dragging his overheated body to the kitchen.

After good thirty minutes of searching, they couldn't find the manual. The gaming party had to be cancelled, to Aomine's disappointment and the two of them moved to Kagami's bedroom that had the air con intact. They were sitting on the floor, lazily flicking through Kagami's impressive collection of basketball magazines that could rival Aomine's. It wasn't as exciting as playing the video game, but it was… nice, Aomine thought. Yes, the magazines were all in English (Kagami had a subscription, the bastard) and Aomine couldn't really understand what was written, but to be honest, he just enjoyed being able to hang out with Kagami like this.

He was cooped up in his house for far too long. Tōō stopped the practices for a few weeks since the team fell out of the Inter High (not that Aomine could participate anyways). Satsuki was out of town visiting her friend in Kobe, and Sakurai took up some summer tutoring. So, Aomine was left to his own devices.
He spent hours laying in bed either doing nothing or going through the same magazines he has been looking at for the last three weeks. He didn't have a gaming console with cool games like Kagami; or NBA TV channel at home. So, he was stuck being bored out of his mind. And this, this was a nice change. Partially, he did want to hang out with Kagami because of his games and the TV channels. But he also wanted to hang out with the other teen because he, well, wanted to. It felt really nice. And the stupid Bond reminded him of that every few minutes.

"Do you want me to translate that for you?" Kagami asked, glancing over to the page Aomine was on. "You've been staring at it for the past five minutes."

"What makes you think I need translations?" Aomine huffed.

"Because you have this look on your face that tells me that," Kagami turned to face Aomine. "Look, I have told you before, I don't mind."

"I can understand fine," the bluenette cleared his throat. For some reason he always had this urge to talk back whenever Kagami was being nice.

"Fine by me," the other teen sighed, going back to his magazine. Aomine could sense through the Bond that Kagami was slightly irritated by the rejection. Feeling embarrassed, Aomine cleared his throat again, gathering all his courage.

"M-maybe, you can translate this interview," he spoke up, "if you want, of course," he added. He left Kagami look at him, and the tips of Aomine's ears turned red. For a moment, the bluenette thought that maybe the other teen will ignore him, but then Kagami shifted again, moving closer to Aomine.

The redhead leaned in closer, looking at the interview with furrowed eyebrows.

"Give me a moment," Kagami said and started mumbling foreign words under his breath. "...During the summer you up that to about 500... it's more just maintenance... dial it back a little..."

The proximity really didn't help the Bond. Aomine tried to keep as still, angling the magazine in such way so that Kagami would be less close, but that didn't really do anything. The other's body heat radiated off him in waves and Aomine was afraid that he would break out in sweat again. He could smell Kagami's body wash (was it strawberry?) and it unnerved the bluenette. He swallowed carefully, his Adam's apple bobbing with the motion. He could feel the Bond acting up again. But this time it was different from all the others. Before, Aomine could feel stings, burns or pain as either one was suffering; he could feel pleasant warmth spread from head to toe when either was happy or content. But this... he felt as if the Bond was up in flames, scorching the inside of his body. It wasn't painful, though. It felt good.

Aomine let a shuddered breath out as the feeling intensified. He saw Kagami's body stiffen over the magazine. He knew that the other could feel the same. After all, they were connected. He saw Kagami break out in sweat, droplets rolling off the back of his neck. Slowly, carefully, he moved back to where he was sitting on the floor. There was a heavy silence in the room. It felt suffocating and electrifying at the same time. Aomine wanted to escape, to leave. But he also felt anticipation build up somewhere deep inside; he wanted to see what will come next.

Aomine's eyes followed every little movement Kagami made. The redhead sat still, letting out shaky breaths and the sweat started to form on his forehead. The room was cool, but both of them felt on fire. As slowly as before, Kagami's head turned, his eyes finally meeting Aomine's. Suddenly, Aomine was plunged into the same warmth as the first time months ago - it was pleasant and safe. His breath hitched, unable to turn his eyes away.
Kagami's eyes were unfocused, yet still somehow intently boring into his own. Everything happened too quick, yet too slow. The redhead's body started to lean in as did Aomine's own. It felt as if the Bond was pulling the two ends back together. It felt forced, yet, at the same time voluntary. Kagami's face was only inches apart, he could feel the other's breath mingle with his ragged one.

Aomine closed his eyes, waiting.

Chapter End Notes

You know, this has to be a record.

It's been almost a year since I last updated, and honestly, the only thing I can say is - life happened.
Sometimes, the creativity just plummets and I can't do anything else, but to go on a hiatus.

Anyways, I hope you enjoyed this (long overdue) update!

-Jynx
Kagami chases after Aomine, and Aomine stays.

There's a little something something near the end of the chapter, so if you're not comfortable reading explicit-ish scenes, look out for this (°‿°).

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Kagami was just... hovering over Aomine.

His heart was beating wildly, the Bond pulling him closer, begging to do something, but Kagami wasn't moving. Aomine was right under him, his eyes closed. It didn't feel right, though. Kagami didn't want to force Aomine to do something that he didn't want to do. Fighting against the Bond, Kagami slowly backed away, his back hitting the side of the bed with a thud. He closed his eyes, throwing his head back. Nothing made sense anymore.

He heard Aomine shift and stand. Clearing his throat, the bluehead started heading out.

“I-, uh. I have to… to go. Thanks for letting me uh… hang out and all,” was the last thing Kagami heard Aomine say before the other teen padded across the apartment and left. Groaning in frustration, Kagami covered his face sucking in a large breath. This was… bad. Yes, bad. Real bad. Super bad. He needed help because, for the first time, he wasn’t sure what all of this was leading to and how he should be handling it.

Picking his phone up from the nightstand, he texted the only person who could potentially help him.

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“Right. Are you sure it’s the Bond doing all of that, though?” Kise leaned forward across the table. In all honesty, Kagami wasn't sure how smart his idea of asking Kise to meet him at Maji Burgers was, but he was the only other person that had somewhat of extensive knowledge on Soulmates.
“What do you mean?” Kagami furrowed his eyebrows, his double-supreme hamburger sitting on his tray, untouched.

“Well, let’s look at it this way,” Kise grabbed a fry off Kagami’s tray. “the Bond, technically, acts like an… invisible connection between you two, right? When one feels strong emotions, like suffering, as we learned,” he muttered the last part, “the other feels the same.”

“Okay…?”

“So, let’s say the moment got… heated. The Bond only amplified what the two of you felt at the time,” Kise’s sharp gold eyes narrowed.

“I don’t follow,” Kagami huffed.

“What he is saying, Kagami-kun,” Kuroko set his half-empty glass of milkshake down as both Kagami and Kise screamed, “calm yourselves, please. What he’s saying is that it wasn’t the Bond’s doing. It was the two of you, and the Bond was just nudging you.”

“Wha- that’s ridiculous!” Kagami choked on air. “I would never-, I mean he and I couldn’t just-”

“I don’t know, Kagamicchi, that’s what it looks to me,” Kise shrugged, leaning back.

“I just- hold on, how long have you been here, Kuroko?”

“Actually, you were the ones who sat down while I was having my milkshake and went on to have the conversation.”

“Right, why do I even bother asking,” Kagami sighed, not surprised by his teammate’s answer.

“Back on the subject, please,” Kise sang clapping his hands together. “The question is, Kagamicchi, what will you do?”
“Huh?”

“As you explained, things were going back to normal. You even asked Aominecchi to hang out, which sounds like a date to me but anyways,” Kise waved it off before Kagami had a chance to retort. “Now, the situation has changed. Again. So, what will you do about it? Last time, both of you were dumb enough to ignore it for so long that it ended up physically harming you.”

“I- I haven’t thought about it. Everything was going well, and then it happened so suddenly… I don’t even know if Aomine will want to even speak to me, after what… almost happened.”

“Kagamicchi,” Kise sat up straight, “tell me, how do you feel about this whole situation? You never actually… specified what you think about this.”

“I… I don’t know,” Kagami looked down to his now-cold food. “Honestly.”

“Well, do you want to have a soulmate?” Kise asked carefully. Kagami raised his eyes, looking at Kise.

“Yes.”

“And, putting aside all of the, uhm, negative drawbacks, how do you find your soulmate to be?”

“It’s Aomine.”

“I know, Kagamicchi,” Kise cleared his throat. “But, let’s say,” he gave the redhead a look, “he’s not Aominecchi, but someone else. Same qualities and all, just a different face.”

“Uhm…” Kagami drew his eyebrows together in thought. He tried to put Aomine’s qualities to a different face. Would it be different if it wasn’t Aomine? “I think, it would be okay?” he answered unsurely. “I mean, I don’t even know him that well.”

“Would you like to know him better? Would that help you figure your feelings out?” Kise threaded carefully.
“I guess so. I mean, we are soulmates, no matter how he or I feel about it. He was, and still is, my rival and a… a friend, I guess.”

“See, this is good. You know Aominecchi more as your rival, but not as a friend. How about this – try learning more about him as a friend rather than a frenemy. That might help you see better how you feel about this whole thing.”

“But what if he doesn’t want to talk to me? How am I supposed to sort it out then?” Kagami sighed.

“What if he does?” Kise argued back. “What if he wants to sort things out just like you do?”

Kagami sat in silence. He could feel both Kise and Kuroko looking at him intently, waiting for him to say something. The teen was afraid that he messed things up for good this time. This was a territory both of them haven’t even thought about. This was something he didn’t even think of.

“Listen, Kagamicchi,” Kise sighed, “I know Aominecchi longer than you have. He’s impulsive, hot-headed, and straight-forward.”

“Nothing new,” Kagami whispered, poking at his burger.

“He also doesn’t read well between the lines. He… He needs to be told things the way they are. If not, he’ll go making his own assumptions and take the worst course of action to ‘fix’ it.” Kise leaned forward a little bit. “My advice? Just go for it. For once, don’t overthink it.”

“What about you Kuroko?” Kagami looked at his teammate.

“I actually agree with Kise-kun on this one, Kagami-kun.”

“Right. Okay.” Kagami swallowed hard. “I will try talking to him first. Just to see how it goes.”

“Good, very good, Kagamicchi,” Kise clapped his hands together. “See? You don’t need to shut people out, they can be quite useful,” he added with a wink. Kagami thanked both Kise and Kuroko
for listening to him and, leaving his cold double-supreme behind, went back home to come up with the best plan of action.

“That went rather well,” Kuroko commented, emptying his glass.

“That it did, Kurokocchi. I think I should be a therapist.” Kise smiled gleefully.

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Kagami found himself outside Tōō Academy.

As he suspected, Aomine was avoiding Kagami. Text messages were left on read, calls – unanswered. He gave Aomine a few days to think things over, but he was afraid that if he waited for too long, the other teen will come up with his own idea of what happened, just like Kise said a few days ago. He could let Aomine make assumptions, so Kagami had to ambush the teen.

Exhaling, as if before an important game, Kagami entered the premises of the Academy. Still wearing his Seirin team sports jacket, Kagami made his way to where the gym was supposed to be. Kuroko said his anonymous source (who was Momoi-san) confirmed that Aomine was indeed attending practice, and Tōō usually finished theirs later than Seirin did. This gave Kagami enough time to make his way over and still catch Aomine before he left. The students of the Academy were giving Kagami a weird look, some even scoffed, but the redhead ignored the stares and glares thrown his way.

“Alright, first-years!” he heard Wakamatsu’s voice booming. “Nice clean-up. Dismissed!” A decently-sized group of students exited through the double-doors. They gave Kagami a look, as the older teen waited outside, leaning against a wall. Carefully peeking inside, Kagami tried to spot where Aomine was.

“And what are you doing here?” Wakamatsu appeared right in front of Kagami, arms crossed. “Don’t tell me you’re here to spy for Seirin. The least you could’ve done is change from your team’s outfit…” he shook his head.

“I- uhh… I’m not spying, Wakamatsu-san,” Kagami cleared his throat. “I was just looking for… Aomine.”
“Couldn’t you text him or something?” the older teen’s eyebrow raised.

“He wouldn’t reply,” Kagami shrugged. “Just wanted to check.”

“Sounds like him,” Wakamatsu muttered, sighing. “Alright, just wait here and—”


“Oh, yes.”

“Great! Come in,” she grabbed Kagami by his arm, pulling him inside, ignoring Wakamatsu’s glare. “He’s in the locker room,” she pointed to the doors on the other side of the court. “You can go talk to him, most of the team is gone anyways,” she pushed confused Kagami across the gym.

“I- I can wait outside,” Kagami tried to argue.

“Oh, don’t be silly, Kagamin! *Best conversations are done in locker rooms,*” she whispered the last part, way too happily for Kagami’s liking. Momoi man-handled Kagami into the men’s locker room, humid from the showers.

As Momoi said, the locker room was practically empty, except for Sakurai who was still packing his sports bag. Clearly, he didn’t see or expect Kagami coming to Tōō’s locker room, so as soon as Sakurai turned around, he let out a yelp.

“K-Kagami-san?” Sakurai’s eyes widened, his hands clutching a towel. “What a-are you d-doing here?”

“Oh, sorry, Sakurai,” the taller teen put his hands in surrender. “I was just… looking for Aomine. Momoi-san said he’s still here. I wanted to talk to him.”

“O-oh, sorry!” the boy yelped, shoving his belongings into the bag. “I’ll g-go! Sorry!” he bowed, rushing out of the room, almost colliding with the door. “Sorry!”
“Wha- It’s not- hey!” Kagami tried to stop Sakurai, but he was already out through the door.

“Oi, Sakurai!” Aomine’s low voice boomed through the empty dressing room. “Sakurai! Did you leave without me?!” he heard Aomine tsk. The water stopped running, plastic shower curtains shuffled and wet steps came closer.

Kagami took a seat on one of the benches, his head low. Maybe it was a bad idea? He still had time to leave, and Aomine would never know he was here. Maybe everything will sort itself out with time? Yeah, that was it. Give it a little bit of time, and things will work themselves out. Kagami gave himself a curt nod and stood up, ready to leave.

“Sakur- ah!” Aomine stepped back as Kagami walked right into him. Wide-eyed Kagami raised his head, inches apart from Aomine’s face. Jumping back, the redhead cleared his throat awkwardly. “Kagami? What the hell are you doing here?” Aomine blinked.

“You were ignoring my texts, so I came to talk to you,” Kagami shoved his hands into the jacket’s pockets.

“So, you decided just to waltz into Toō, break into the locker room and wait for me?” Aomine’s brows furrowed in confusion and disbelief.

“Not exactly. Momoi-san pushed me in here.”

“Of course she did,” Aomine tsk-ed again.

“I just think we need to talk about what… happened,” Kagami sat back on the bench as Aomine opened his locker, his back to the redhead.

“Sure.”

“Okay. Well, I…” Kagami let out a heavy breath through his nose, turning around from Aomine to give him the privacy. “I don’t even know where to begin. It all kinda escalated real quick. And… I don’t even know what happened. So, there’s that.”
“Right.”

“This is not helpful, Aomine,” Kagami sighed, his back to Aomine. He heard the locker shut and turned around, thinking Aomine was about to leave him. Instead, the bluehead sat next to him, fully clothed, his head down.

“For once, I’m not going anywhere, Bakagami.”

“So?”

“It’s… really complicated.”

“Yeah.”

“I mean we were planning to hang out and be friends, right?”

“Yeah, that’s right.”

“A-and,” Aomine cleared his throat, “it kinda went off rails.”

“It did, yeah,” Kagami sighed, looking up to the ceiling. “I just… I don’t know anymore.”

“Know what?” Aomine asked in a quiet voice. “If you want to be soulmates with me?”

“Huh?” Kagami’s eyes snapped to Aomine’s sitting form. “I never said that.”

“What else could it have meant,” Aomine sneered. “It always comes ‘round, Kagami.”

“Are you even listening to a word I’ve been saying?” Kagami drew his brows together. “I just
literally said, that was not what I meant. But you still go around making assumptions, just like Kise said,” the redhead tsk-ed.

“Kise? You talked about this with Kise?” Aomine’s voice grew louder.

“Yeah, I did! I didn’t have anyone else to talk to, y’know! He was the only one who agreed to help me out!”

“You can’t walk around telling about… this to everyone!” Aomine motioned between them.

“Oh, I’m sorry, didn’t all the damn Miracles came to your aid about this?” Kagami stood up, anger flaring up.

“I didn’t ask them to! That’s the difference!”

“For someone who is so worried about me dumping your ass, you sure want to keep this situation buried deep down,” Kagami snatched his bag, ready to leave. As always, things went wrong. As always, Aomine and he couldn’t keep things calm. There was no point in even talking about anything anymore. It was clear to Kagami that Aomine wasn’t on the same page with him. Their understanding and expectations for soulmates were completely different and nothing would change that.

“You dumping my ass?” Aomine was now standing, too. “I wasn’t the one who kept on running away from this!”

“Admit it, Aomine,” Kagami looked at the other teen with a stone-cold face, “what I want and what you want is not the same.”

“What are you on about?” Aomine stepped closer to Kagami. Kise’s words about being straightforward echoed in the redhead’s mind.

“I want someone who I can talk to, who would try understand me, care about me, Aomine,” Kagami swallowed hard, realizing that he was opening up to the bluehead idiot in front. “Someone who I can spend my time with, who I can trust. That’s what a soulmate should be.”
Aomine was still holding onto Kagami’s forearm, his dark blue eyes looking at the redhead intently.

“But all we do is argue and hurt each other,” Kagami shrugged, his voice now quiet. “Being friends, sure. But soulmates…? I… I-” the redhead’s voice wavered at the end.

“Look at me, Kagami,” Aomine tightened his grip on Kagami’s arm. The redhead raised his eyes to meet the other’s. “Do you want me to be your soulmate?”

“I- I don’t know,” Kagami dropped his gaze to the tiled floor.

“That’s not good enough,” Aomine pulled Kagami a bit closer, making him look at the bluehead again. “Kagami Taiga, do you want me to be your soulmate?” Aomine insisted. Kagami has never seen Aomine this determined, not even on the court. He couldn’t figure him out. One minute he was accusing Kagami of rejecting him, the other he was- “Because I know what I want,” Aomine cut off Kagami’s thoughts. “So, what do you want, Kagami?”

“I- I just-,” the redhead was struggling. What did he want? He wanted a soulmate. His whole life he waited for this, wanted this. But his soulmate was Aomine. Was he okay with it? Aomine was his rival. But as annoying and insufferable he was, Kagami also though of Aomine as a friend. They challenged each other to be better on the court, they both dedicated their lives to the same passion, they liked hanging out around each other; at least Kagami thought so. Having ignored Aomine before and being ignored by him, it didn’t sit well with the redhead. He didn’t want to lose a friend over a-

Suddenly, Aomine moved close to Kagami, his eyes set on him. The Bond flared up, the burn alive in his chest, just like last time. Whatever Kagami was about to say got caught in his throat. Ever so slowly, Aomine leaned in. They were so close. Their breaths mingled, Kagami’s forearm burning where Aomine was holding onto him. The blue eyes dropped to Kagami’s lips, a short breath leaving Aomine. Kagami’s head was spinning.

Was this what Aomine meant by knowing what he wanted? Did Aomine still want to be Kagami’s soulmate, after all, that they put each other through?

Kagami let out a short breath through his lips. They were parted and unmoving. He could hear his own heartbeat pounding in his ears, and he could feel Aomine’s; his heart was as frantic as his own.
The Bond, it felt as if it was snapping the two ends of a rubber band back together. Kagami couldn’t overthink anything anymore. He fluttered his eyes closed and gave into the pull.

Aomine’s lips touched Kagami’s. It was nothing more than a touch, a light press – his lips on the other’s, but to Kagami, it felt like a calm after a long storm. Aomine’s lips lingered on his for a moment longer before pulling away.

Kagami let out a breath he didn’t know he was still holding, both of them only inches apart. He looked at the other teen. Aomine’s eyes were now open, wide and unfocused, looking straight at him.

“I-I’m sorry, I should’ve asked, waited,” Aomine breathed out, as if not being able to believe he did it.

“Shut up,” Kagami whispered. There was an unexplainable static surrounding the two, and it took only a second before something shifted in Kagami and he closed the distance between them. He pressed his lips to Aomine’s with more strength, feeling their warmth. He slowly moved his hand from Aomine’s chest to his neck, wrapping his hand around his nape, seeking after the sensation he hasn’t felt before. Kagami finally knew what he wanted.

Biting onto Aomine’s bottom lip slightly, he heard the bluenette suck in a sharp breath through his nose. Aomine’s hand stayed on Kagami’s forearm, but the other carefully wrapped itself around the redhead’s waist. Kagami pulled on the bottom lip with his teeth, making Aomine gasp and part his lips. As the redhead carefully slipped his tongue into Aomine’s mouth, exploring it with slowness, emotions flooded through the Bond. In his state of delirium, Kagami could feel what Aomine was feeling – he sensed fear, but there were relief and happiness overpowering him. The Bond now felt like an open nerve; all of their emotions were flooding through their bodies like a river.

Kagami broke the kiss, breathless. His was panting heavily, his forehead resting against Aomine’s heaving chest. The room was silent, only their breathing echoing.

Chapter End Notes

Guess who's back (back again)!

Right, long overdue, as per usual, but here you are nevertheless!

Thank you for all the comments on the last chapter, for 390 kudos and almost 7800 hits
on this story! I'm glad that despite my irregular updates and disappearances, you guys, are still reading A Heartbeat Away. It might be a slow writing process for me, but I will do my best to, one day, finish the story up.

Thank you again,

-Jynx

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!