You Haven't Got A Clue

by blom.erzi

Summary

Ah, 1969... What a summer.

Hetalia and the characters belong respectfully to Hidekaz Himaruya.

Notes

Haha, descriptions aren't really my thing. But I hope you enjoy, reader.

See the end of the work for more notes.
Part One

Chapter Summary

Haha, I got the idea of this from a line in a song. But anyways, this is only gonna be like, four chapters.

Also, if you were wondering (I know you weren't, but still) if you want to know what Kiku's hair looks like, look up George Harrison, 1966. He probably dressed the same way, too.

(Video: Do You Want To Know A Secret- The Beatles, 1963)

"You know, if you're lonely, you can talk to me..." Alfred said, looking over at the boy with interest.

It came out more of a question, less of the empathetic voice he was looking for. He had been watching this curious boy for years upon years, months upon months, weeks upon weeks. He was a very quiet boy who didn't speak unless spoken to, and hardly lifted his head up unless to answer the teacher. And even that was seldom.

He jumped up from his book, staring at Alfred with shaky eyes. Alfred was taken aback- the boy, Kiku Honda, seemed so scared by such a suggestion. But why, he didn't know. Didn't everyone want to talk to friends about their problems? Questions that kept them up at night, dreams that caused them to toss and turn in their sleep, didn't they report it to their friends? Did... Did Kiku even have any?

Kiku had been in the majority of Alfred's classes for years. They both seemed fond of each other- and even more fond of badgering one another, silently one upping the other's actions- testing each other. Who would crack first? Who would talk to the other first? The tension between them couldn't be deciphered even by the most seasoned fox- who knew what they were thinking? Was the tension a question, much like the ones that kept Alfred up at night? A simultaneous nod that went both ways, a mutual *Why do I always find your eyes on me?* kind of stare. A stare, a nod of the head, a competition. An, *I know you find me interesting, too.* A pleasant thing. Or, was it more of, *Why the hell are you always looking at me?* kind of tension that could very well go both ways?

After what could've been one minute, or ten, Alfred didn't think Kiku would answer him. And after all the thinking Alfred had done under what could've been a minute (that could make up for fifteen years of dilly dallying), he didn't think he'd pry. But Kiku looked down at the ground, an unsure look on his rather perfect face.

"Who... Who said I was lonely?"

He looked up to face Alfred with dull eyes through shaggy hair, taking his stand. The possible start of another longer, much bigger competition?

Alfred did not want to be rude. He didn't want to see the boy he'd been watching for years driven away. But this one really was too much.

"Well, dude, I mean... You're always in that isolation of yours. You never look up, nothing. You never speak unless spoken to, and I never see you with people," He said, shaking his head. He could've honestly rattled off more things that described the boy, but for now, he left it at that.
"I... I don't know what you mean..." He said unevenly, turning his head away. After all these years, after all of his well thought out yet simultaneously impulsive comebacks, had just been blown over by a cold gust, a gentle wind that spoke louder than words ever could. The mound of words that this so called 'King' stood on had been knocked over, precariously built by Alfred. It was no wonder, seeing how haphazardly he had stacked them, but he wasn't going to give up very easily.

"Hey- Sorry to make you uncomfortable, really. I just wanted- want to be your friend!" He exclaimed, putting his unfamiliar hand on the boy's shoulder. Kiku turned to face him immediately, staring at his hand. But- it was gentle. And Alfred felt that his touch was not unwelcomed.

"R-Really? Me? Friends with zipperhead?" He asked, looking at Alfred with truly shocked eyes.
They were no longer scared. The statement said was not meant to be self depreciating. It was real, true surprise at such a thing. His eyes looked wavering- much different than that regular dulled appearance. Almost as if he was going to cry from something Alfred could not place. Alfred looked at him in shock- what did he mean?

"Wha- Of course! I'm not gonna hate you like everyone else because your skin is a bit different than mine," He said, smiling at the boy, showing him all his pearly white teeth. Alfred was not going to let war stand in his way. Kiku again looked taken aback- even a little scared. But he nodded nonetheless, sweeping his hair out of his eyes.

"So, wanna hang out after school? At the park?" He said, jerking his head in the direction of the window. Kiku looked out to see the sunny state of California, a clear day. But weren't all days clear? That's what Kiku missed the most about New York, the rain. But they had to leave- his father said it wouldn't be good for them to live there anymore. Three years he had been here, Orange County- and even after three years of adjusting, he was still the new kid. Still looked over if not unaccepted by most.

"Uh... Sure... Where to?" He asked, looking at Alfred again. Did he already tell him? Who knew? He was much too lost in his thoughts.

"The park, man. Are you sure you can go?" He asked, slightly concerned. Kiku was spacing out big time. But Kiku nodded eagerly. "Of course! I can go wherever I want!" He said, looking defiantly at Alfred. It was amusing- he had just come out of his three year long shell, only to make quite an abrasive comeback. Alfred admired and smiled at the pluckiness he was expecting come.

"Mr. Jones? Mr. Honda? Would you like to share with the class, since it seems far too urgent to wait after the lesson?" The teacher asked, dropping his piece of chalk in irritation. Yes, geez, his teaching skills could be questionable, but they should try to be quieter. Damn.
Kiku shrunk immediately. It seemed he had never gotten in trouble before, let alone being called out on something bad, a small, mindless mistake. Had Kiku Honda ever lived?

"Uh, we're very sorry, I-"

"Sure! Okay, so, I wanted to be friends with him, right? Well I invited him to the park, and guess what? He said yes!" He said brightly, as if he had done this every day. Kiku looked up at him and could've strangled him. One should never mess with teachers!

"That's very nice and well Alfred, but couldn't that wait? I'm sure Kiku wouldn't want to be annoyed by you all lesson. I feel bad for even putting him next to you."

Kiku raised his eyebrows. He didn't know what he was feeling more- indignation, anger, or pressure? Embarrassment? Wait... Anger, for Alfred? Why should he feel such a strong word, such a
strong emotion for someone either than himself? Whatever he was feeling, he tried to hide it the best he could. Well, at least he didn't have to think too hard on what they would talk about at the park.

"...Aw, Mr. Kirkland. Are you lonely? I would say you can talk to me, but... I wouldn't want that. I'm sorry you annoy your friends, but I don't annoy mine."

That was how Kiku and Alfred spent their first few hours being 'friends' in detention. Alfred was happy he gave the teacher what he deserved though- he didn't deserve to be talked to in such a way. Yes, he should've waited until after class, but he didn't deserve his teacher's asshole behaviour.

He sighed as he titled his paper 'Lines'. He leaned into his hand- it had only been about five minutes since detention started.

Lines
Alfred F. Jones
April 3, 1969

Man, his dad would kill him. But what would kill him more? His father, or his hand cramps? He looked over to Kiku's paper, seeing fifty lines already there. In five minutes.

Well, at least Mr. Kirkland had gone easy on them. Only three hundred fifty lines, and an easy sentence, too.

I will not disrespect the teacher, he wrote, sighing. Man, one down, three hundred forty nine to go.

"H-Hey, Kiku! I know my smart mouth got us both in trouble, but... Can you still come to the park? It's only three thirty," He said, panting after him. He had run to catch up with Kiku, who seemed to be on the verge of tears. Alfred tried not to stare- Damn, what kind of a sheltered life does he live?

He thought, looking away, poorly covering his actions. He didn't want Kiku to know he had seen how much it had meant to him. But Kiku knew- and somehow, it didn't bother him. He simply wiped at his eyes, and looked down at his bent down form. He knew he was making the right choice.

"Of course, Alfred F. Jones," He said gently. When Alfred looked up to him from his hands and knees, he was found with a rare, possibly impossible sight- Kiku's smile. It was soft- a soft smile, conjured by beautiful, soft lips. Do they feel as soft as they look? Woah. He looked down, unable to face him. Did he really just think that?

Looking at his round, innocent, kind face, Kiku knew it was impossible for any threat to lie there.

"Get up, Alfred F. Jones," Kiku said, reaching out his hand. Alfred immediately stood up, both confused and oddly drawn in by the sudden commanding voice- and that welcoming hand. He immediately took his dainty hand, and started running, letting Kiku's short lived lead die.

Nearly tripping in surprise, he struggled to keep up, not being very active.

He panted with the strain of running to an unfamiliar place.

"A-Alfred F. Jones! Slow down a little...!"

"It's just Alfred!"

They sat on the swings, swinging back and forth modestly. For the most part, Alfred didn't know what to say. For the first time in his life, he was truly rendered speechless.

Kids from their school walked close by, suddenly sporadically yelling when they saw the two together.

"Al! Get away from zipperhead! He doesn't know Engrish very well yet!" They yelled over waving to him with one, outstretched arm. Alfred almost yelled back a retort, but it seemed Kiku could
handle himself, even if it was just a weak little retaliation.

"You guys, stop...! I don't even know Japanese!" He yelled, a sour look on his face. Alfred couldn't tell if it was a lie or not, but he definitely sounded California.
He shook his head as they walked away, laughing and shoving one another. Alfred looked at him, eyeing Kiku's expression which plainly stated, "Don't worry, I'm used to it."

But Alfred was curious, and cocked his head as a small puppy would.

"So... You're Japanese?"

Kiku shot him a look, swinging his legs back and forth. "I'm American, Jones," He said, fumbling with his sweater. Alfred stared back in a very confused manner.
"But, your blood-"
"It's American, Alfred, just as your is."
Alfred shut up for the time being, staring at a tuft of grass before him, letting that sickeningly sweet warm feeling spread into his chest. 

Did he just call him 'Alfred'? Why was he getting so excited over that? Perhaps it was because Alfred didn't have many real friends? After three years, this was still the first time they had ever talked. Alfred would always want to pair with him for projects, but couldn't find the courage in his heart to ask him. Kiku always ended up being paired with the teacher, much to his dismay.

"So... Now I see why you always stick to your sweet solitude.." Alfred said, still watching the boys play around with watchful eyes. Next time round that happened, he was definitely giving them a what-for.
Kiku glanced at him through his squinted eyes and chuckled knowingly, shaking his head in a nonchalant fashion.
"Oh, believe me. You'd think you know, but you haven't got a clue!" He said, shaking his head as he kicked a piece of Earth. It flew a surprising distance, landing near the dirty lake. "You know, it wasn't like this back in New York. But... The riots and protesters were too much, and we moved. Don't have to see constant marches anymore," He said, shrugging a bit. Multiple thoughts flew through Alfred's mind at once. New York? Where was his accent?
Alfred didn't know how he could make it seem like no big deal! I mean, this was war they were talking about!
"But I have to say... Not much teasing went on over there," He said, bowing his head, defeated.
Alfred almost wanted to reach over and hug him, but decided against it. Kiku already had enough on his plate, and probably wasn't... Probably wasn't like Alfred.

Alfred looked at him thoughtfully, his blue eyes sparking with interest. Kiku Honda had piqued it to the point that he couldn't ignore it.
"You know... It's okay, though. I can tell you didn't really have friends there. And I know you can miss it, but... It's good here. We would've never met, and you'd never find another me," He said, winking at him jokingly. Kiku stared at the boy through shaggy hair, his interest also piqued. He knew Alfred to be right, but... He didn't know if the fact was a positive or negative one. He didn't quite know how to deal with him. So, he tested the waters.

"Alfred F. Jones, I barely even know you," He said shortly. Kiku licked his lips subconsciously, hungrily waiting for his answer.
"Haha! Not yet, anyways. Just you wait! We'll be inseparable!" He said, pumping his fist in the air. He seemed so excited to become his friend, Kiku didn't know whether to be pleased or to recoil. But barely getting any friends, he smiled, surprising himself. Too bad Alfred wasn't looking. He knew the way Alfred looked at him despite only speaking him today, and he knew how he lit up and stared
at his lips as he smiled- and he loved that attention, especially from such a handsome boy.

"Alfred F. Jones." Alfred jumped as Kiku's voice was suddenly a bit deeper, and gave Kiku his undivided attention. He liked the way his voice sounded. Kiku regained his sentence immediately after pausing, as if he hasn't stopped in the first place.
"Do you got a girlfriend?" He said casually, looking up from his shoes to Alfred's face. He wanted to see how red he would get.
"I-It's just Alfred. And, uh... A-Ahaha! No. I... I'm not really into that," He said, scratching his neck. He felt his face go red with embarrassment, having such a question sprung on him without warning. Well, he wasn't lying; but it wasn't the whole truth, either.
Kiku shrugged, a miniscule smile resting upon his glowing face.
"Yeah, me neither."
If the tingling feeling Kiku had wasn't lying, Alfred had been staring at his lips, probably subconsciously.
"Ok, Just Alfred."
Alfred squinted at him, a playful look that made Kiku chuckle a little. Looking into Alfred's clear eyes, he knew it to be impossible for any threat to lie there.
"May I call you Fred?"
Alfred smiled down at his feet, kicking the ground lightly. He didn't look up to greet Kiku's light smile with his own, instead marveling in his little victory for the time being. He had finally become friends with Kiku Honda. His grin almost turned mischievous; it seemed apparent to the both of them that Alfred had won this three year war.

"Of course, Kiku Honda." He looked up as he said it, unable to look away anymore. Goddamn. Even if this war was over, he could still feel that tingling in his bones- is this what it felt like to finally make a friend, to let it happen naturally? All of Alfred's friendships felt forced, but... This was new. Alfred liked new. That old tingling feeling inside had soon begun to blossom, into something that felt more... Magnetic? He was sure it was mutual, it didn't need to be said.

For what seemed to be a lifetime, Alfred had been so drawn to Kiku in more aspects than one. He could say it went both ways. But for the three years they've had their eyes on each other, not saying any words, Alfred felt inside he was yelling- if only he could speak his thoughts! Kiku was the first boy, the first person to ever cause him trouble speaking. But his head was just full of little lines- things like, "Be my friend, please!" and "You can talk to me! You can talk to me!" Would roll around, making him dizzy. But all they had ever shared before today were small inclines of the head, nodding, and some eye contact. That was all. And Alfred was hungry for more. He knew Kiku was, too. For the first time in his life, it was Alfred who was desperate for a friend. For one boy in particular.

The next few days were filled with learning new things about each other- favourite colors, favourite songs, favourite movies. Little things like how Kiku could tie a cherry stem with his tongue, or how Alfred could move his ears. How Kiku loved to eat pepperoni pizza but how he liked hot dogs the most, or how Alfred could eat ten slices in ten minutes. Things that excited Kiku and Alfred, things that told them their friendship was real. Three weeks into everything, Alfred decided it was finally time to let Kiku have some real fun.
"Hey, Kiku, you wanna go somewhere with me?" Alfred said one day at the park. He looked up from his milk box, turning to face Kiku. He was staring at him, something Alfred couldn't make out mingled in his expression.
"Well, we are right now, Fred," He said, gesturing in front of them smartly. He took the milk box from Alfred's hand, sipping a bit without asking. How terrible. Milk on a hot day. Already inseparable after three weeks. What was worse?
Alfred shot him a look. "You know what I mean! I mean like, out out," He said, elbowing him in the side. Kiku looked at him. Even he wasn't brave enough yet to ask Alfred out. But he wasn't one to back down. But suddenly the old, shy Kiku was back. "U-Uh.. Sure.. Where to?" He stuttered, looking at him. His face was dusted pink with embarrassment. Alfred looked at him with a shit eating grin, startling Kiku a bit.

"Ok... Meet me here at ten. I have something to show you," He said, smiling a genuine smile, acting as if he wasn't planning anything. Despite being shy just a few moments ago, Kiku took some time to process this. Out? At ten? Late? He almost wanted to protest, but looking Alfred over, finally resting his gaze on those startlingly blue eyes, he nodded.

"I'll be there."

Alfred sighed in relief. It seemed as if he would run if Kiku denied him.

Walking side by side, shoulders brushing, hands close enough to touch, they sat by the pond.

Kiku was on edge. He had never snuck out- never. Now that he thought of it, he had never gotten in trouble before. Well, besides from the detention from Mr. Kirkland, in English class. Whatever, he didn't mind, the guy was a jerk anyways.

He looked at his watch- nine sixteen. He had to leave now if he wanted to meet him.

Meeting Alfred was a hassle- they could barely even see, and meeting one another consisted of bumping foreheads and nearly shouting.

"Uh... We have to do a little walking to get there... But uh, be ready to beat feet if something happens, okay?"

"W-What? Alfred F. Jones, are we breaking in somewhere?" He asked, stomping on his foot. His head jerked down, grimacing in a way he didn't know possible.

"Well... Not exactly... But, you'll see, don't flip your wig! And it's Fred! Remember?"

"Fine."

Wait! No! Not fine! Trespassing was a crime!

Kiku couldn't tell if it was a lie or not. Shaking his head, he sat and wondered how he got into all of this. Why did he agree to this? Three weeks, and he had already gone soft, not able to deny him. But... Not really three weeks. More like three years.

He smiled at the thought of that. He couldn't wait until they were already together for three more years. And after that, too.

Wait.

He was planning on staying with him? For a long time? That long?

He smiled, looking at the street lamps reflecting in Alfred's eyes.

Good.

"H-Here, we better get jamming! Also, we can't be loud..." He suddenly took hold of Kiku's hand, make him blush once more, running in the direction in which he was taking him. Kiku was finding it easier and easier to keep up with him after these three long weeks- both mentally and physically. Kiku felt that after these three years, he was finally breaking out of that shell of his- because of Alfred. He was finally getting better at talking, standing up for himself, and having fun, only after a little over three weeks. Twenty four days. Would he still be having this kind of fun twenty four years from now? Even in the tenth grade, at age sixteen, he hadn't had any public speaking skills. No friends, either. The cruel remarks all due to his blood and a bloody war had been enough to keep him up at night- his worries could be drowned out with only the record player some nights, but now, that didn't have to happen.

Not only did Kiku have someone to defend him now, he could now stand up for himself. Or, he knew at least how to retort now. Silence was no longer his go-to.

After running for fifteen minutes, they reached a chain linked fenced area. It wasn't very tall at all,
and very easy to 'climb'. Once Kiku had entered, he could already feel his blood boil. And with what? Fear? Anger? Confusion? Either way, he walked close to Alfred, restraining from holding his hand. It wasn't out of fear, either- it was such a beautiful night, with a nice breeze. Kiku breathed a big, pleasing breath, taking in the scents. He was so glad it was Friday night, and that he could spend it with Alfred. It almost made him sad to think about- was he humoring himself? Kiku had never found another with the same kind of preferences. But even if Alfred took his hand as it was nothing, and pointed it to the sky, he knew. He felt his heart leap into his throat, and he didn't need telling; His feelings were requited.

They laid down in a spot near a small pond, heads dangerously close to touching. Alfred pointed to the sky with an excited finger. "See...? This is what I wanted to show you... The sky is so beautiful here... And the pond? Look at it, Kiku," He said, sitting up. He put his hand on Kiku's back, giving him that help both of them knew Kiku didn't need. It was nice to do little things for your favourite person. Kiku might've gasped when he registered what he saw- all of the sky's stars reflected in the black pond, making it seem as of they were out of the world.

"Y-Yeah... Far out, Fred," He said, chuckling weakly. God, it was all too much. The beautiful scenery with Alfred, the most beautiful person he's ever seen. The kindest person he's ever known. It was much too surreal to take in- he had snuck out, just to see this with a boy he liked. It... It was honestly such an accomplishment, such a happy thought he started to laugh aloud.

"K-Kiku... You okay?"
He shook his head, wiping away happy tears he was relieved Alfred couldn't see. "Yes, Fred, I'm just happy... Anyways, where are we?" He said, still chuckling a little. How'd he get stuck with such a stud like Alfred?
"Oh," He started sheepishly. Would this disappoint Kiku?
"We... We're actually at a strawberry field... But every time I see it, the pond makes me feel... So good," He said, slowly shaking his head.
"And I was like, 'I have to share this with Kiku!'" He said, plopping back down. Kiku laid down next to him, his alert face a couple inches from Alfred's- he could feel his light breath.

"Maybe... Maybe I'll take you here for your sixteenth birthday," He said, slightly chuckling. Oh no, he couldn't seem to stop smiling that day.
"Oh, totally! But... Where would you want to go for your sixteenth birthday?" He asked, sighing in content. Honestly, he could die happy right now. His homework was done, he was with Kiku, and they were talking about the future. How could he get any happier? He felt as if his heart could melt right there, staring at Kiku, feeling his breath on his chin.

His breathing quickened with small giggles, and Alfred could tell he was smiling with his teeth. "Fred, I'm already sixteen," He said, moving his hair out of his eyes. He wanted to see the way the pale glow of the moons reflected upon his fair skin, bouncing off his blond hair in the most attractive way. Little did he know, Alfred was doing the same.
Alfred smiled, direction his attention from the stars to the boy laying two inches away from him.

"I hope we get to spend our seventeenth birthdays together..." He said, cutting himself off, even if he had more to say. He refrained from saying 'I want to spend many others together, too' and just settled on watching Kiku for the time being.
Just as Kiku was about to say 'me, too', but was cut off as both boys looked in the opposite direction. All the lights had gone on in a small cabin, not very far from their spot, and they both stood, mirroring each others actions.
"K-Kiku? We... We should get out of here," He said hurriedly, looking around him. But Kiku was one step ahead of him; taking Alfred and his hand by surprise, he sped off, dragging Alfred behind. Another victory.
Even as Alfred walked Kiku back to his window, even if he simply patted his shoulder, even if he was just itching to reach over and *kiss* him, he had that light, airy feeling. The winded feeling in his chest never subsided, and for the first time, Kiku Honda felt.... Alive. He had never had so much fun. Closing his window and soon his eyes, he smiled through the darkness, unable to sleep. He kept thinking of the way Alfred's eyes glittered outside his window as he bid him goodnight.

*Man*, he thought,

*I am so gone for him.*
"Kiku? Come get your breakfast, babe," A slightly taller Asian man said cheerfully. How could he be so hyper in the early morning?
He opened Kiku's curtains, letting sunlight flood the room. Kiku flinched, grumpily turning over as the sun hit his scrunched face directly.
Why had he chosen this spot for his bed, again?
Oh. For that reason exactly.
Kiku bolted up in bed, seeing his clock read ten am.
"D-Dad-"
"I know, Kiku. But you were so tired, and having a good dream, so I let you sleep a little longer,"
He said nonchalantly, his lax shoulders offering a small shrug.
"Hop to it, Kiku."

Kiku ate his daily breakfast of rice, egg, and spam, rubbing his eyes. One month. One month since Alfred had taken Kiku to the beautiful strawberry field. Kiku wanted to laugh, recalling when they had to flee the scene. He was a little scared, but to hold Alfred's hand, to feel the night air against his face and in his lungs with Alfred was so exhilarating, he knew he'd treasure the moment forever. It was a breathtaking night spent with a breathtaking person, on the inside and out.
Oh. Alfred.
Kiku recalled his dream last night with a slight blush. In the dream, Alfred had come over with his favourite record.
Kiku didn't have any idea to what his favourite record really was, but in the dream, he had brought over odyssey and the oracle. He shivered as he recalled the rest of the pleasant dream- they danced to Magical Mystery Tour, but mostly to This Will Be Our Year together, arms around each other. They were so caught up in the never ending song, with each other, that after what felt like hours, they stopped dancing, only to get another workout, the song changing to She's Not There.

Needless to say, when he Kiku woke up in the morning feeling the air on his slick thighs, wet from what he knew couldn't be sweat, and that weight between his legs, he found the rather embarrassing thoughts from earlier in the day had leaked into his dreams. Was he in love? It wasn't the first time he had a wet dream, but... Alfred was different. Alfred was Alfred.
He choked on his milk, going red in the face, and not from sleep. Thank God Yao didn't notice anything off this morning. Or maybe he did. Either way, he kept his mouth shut.
"What's wrong, son?" He asked, patting Kiku's back with a tired hand.
"O-Oh... Nothing, I just thought of my f-friend..." He said, mumbling through his food. He rubbed the back of his head in anxiousness.
Don't give yourself away.
But Yao frowned at this.
"Friend... Is... Is he mean to you, Kiku?" He asked, sitting across from him with a cup of coffee. His hair was hanging freely. It seemed he too, had had a lazy morning.
"No! No... Not... He's not like everyone else, dad," He said, eating his breakfast hurriedly. He wanted to say, "He's not like the other boys!" but stopped himself, knowing how suspicious that would've sounded. Yao frowned again, and Kiku bit back more words, as well as his tongue. Had he perhaps said too much? He could never be too careful. Kiku knew his father wasn't... Wasn't too accepting of people like him.
He quickly finished the food on his plate, putting it on the sink.
"May I be excused?" He asked sporadically, an impatient tone hinting in his voice. Yao looked at his
own full plate of food in disappointment. He had only just finished making his. "I suppose..." He trailed off, practically signing the words. But, he knew he shouldn't be disappointed. His son was finally going out, having a friend, having fun, being a normal kid. It was everything he could've asked for.
"Kiku," He said, stopping him. He turned around, trying very hard not to roll his eyes. "Be back before dinner."

Kiku ran up to his room, shutting the door behind him. He closed his eyes in annoyance as the beads that hung in the doorway went all over his face. Picking through the many records Yao bought him, he found the Zombies and the Beatles. Magical Mystery Tour or Odessy and the Oracle? Putting the Zombies away, he settled for his favourite band. He looked over at his brand new albums- Abbey Road and The Yellow Submarine. He put them both away, deciding he'd listen to them with Alfred later.

He marveled at all of the record covers covering his walls; The Doors, The Zombies, The Bee Gees, The Beatles, The Drifters- whatever Yao had though he'd like, too many things to name. All of them were newer, the older album covers still with their records.
Yes, honestly, Kiku had a ridiculous amount of records, making him seem quite spoiled. He was an only child, and they were rewards. His father rewarded good deeds and good grades with gifts- and Kiku could not remember a time that they were not records.

Laughing in some unknown source of happiness, Kiku rode his bike go the park, unable to contain that gregarious laughter that would constantly spill out of his smiling lips these days- what was with him? He was just so happy to see Alfred, so he rode a bit carelessly, almost bumping into garbage cans and cars, even people a couple of times.
Riding his brand new red bike, he accidentally bumped into one of the meaner kids at school, recoiling when he saw who it was, yet polite nonetheless.
"O-Oh, sorry!" He said, speeding off, lips threatening to release the musical laughter he knew Alfred would love. For some reason, even as he heard the boy yell "Watch yourself, Buddhahead!" He felt a smile creeping unto his lit up face, feeling his lips tingle even from a mile away. He started singing Martha, My Dear with an exaggerated British accent the rest of the way, not noticing looks from strangers. He may or may not have replaced "Martha" with "Alfred", and it may or may not have been a slip of the tongue.

"Freddie!"
He face palmed. He couldn't believe he let that ridiculous pet name slip, especially in public. Did that really happen?

Alfred looked up immediately from his own shoes, red in the face. It seemed that ever since Kiku had accepted his friendship, he had nothing to do when he wasn't around. He didn't even want to really be around his brother and father anymore.
"Can you come to my house? My dad is going out... Like, in an hour?" He asked earnestly, still remembering the grocery list in his pocket. He looked like he wouldn't take no for an answer, even if he knew that wasn't Alfred's response.
Alfred looked taken aback, though nodding nevertheless.
"I'll be there."
"Cool. Bring your favourite record."
He turned and walked off to his bike, astonishing Alfred. Had he really just come for this?

"Wait! How did you know I was here?!" He called over, waving his arm. He turned around, small smile on his cool face.
"Alfred F. Jones, I always know where you are."
He sped off, feeling a hunger he knew wasn't caused by the food.
The hour went by slowly. All he could do was twiddle his thumbs and listen to music. But what was new? That had been his life before Alfred, before he realized he had a voice that that stupid war had taken away from him.

He had nothing to do after picking up and putting away the groceries. So he sat around, listening and fumbling with his White Album record, eventually replacing it with Magical Mystery Tour, maybe sitting by his window. Maybe.

When Alfred knocked in the door, he was met with Kiku almost right away, his shaggy hair a bit disheveled.

"Kiku... Your... Your house is so big! I-It's bad!" He said a little nervously, taking off his shoes by the door.

Kiku was very pleased that he knew to do that already, but...

He looked down at his own feet to see shoes still on. It seemed he was in such a hurry to get home, he forgot to remove them.

"Actually... You don't have to do that," He said idly, taking a look down at his feet and shrugging.

"Yeah, but... Won't your dad think it's dirty?" He asked, not putting them back on.

"Well, he isn't home."

They walked up the spiral staircase, Kiku watching Alfred in amusement. Yes, it was a little hard to believe in only two people lived in this house but... It wasn't that big, right? Oh. Speaking of big.

"Fred, you were in my dream last night," He said innocently, liking his look of shock. He seemed very flattered that Kiku had dreamt of him, even if he had many times.

"Oh, really? What was it about?" He asked, genuinely interested. Kiku smiled at how cute it was, but hid the fact that his throat had grown dry with such skill only a person as quiet as himself could possess.

"Oh, we just listened to records, and hung out," He shrugged. He had left out the whole, you know, blow job part.

"By the way, I bought a brand new needle."

Alfred sat cross legged on Kiku's bed, clutching his record as if it were his lifeline. He seemed so tense in Kiku's house, in his room, in his bed.

"Where... Where's your cat?" He asked, looking around. He had heard about her many time before, but he still hadn't seen her. He was in need of an animal's comfort right about now, even if cats typically didn't like him. "I don't know... She's shy, you know, so you might not see her," He said, shrugging. The cat was the least of his worries now.

Kiku sat cross legged across from him, fishing out something from his pocket. He pulled out a pack of cigarettes, putting one in his mouth. Alfred stared, trying to digest the image of Kiku smoking.

"Woah, where'd you get that?" He asked excitedly, pointing at them.

Kiku smiled deviously, waving them around boldly in his hand.

"Five finger discount."

"Woah, who'd you bag it from?" He asked, a newfound respect for Kiku.

Kiku got his box of matches that he usually used for candles, lighting one and lighting the end of the cigarette, shrugging.

"My dad. He has so many, he probably won't even notice," He said, sitting in front of Alfred. All of it was true, and he not only wanted to impress Alfred, but have fun with him.

He took one ridiculously long drag, out of humour or ignorance, I do not know, and released it again as he coughed, engulfing his face in a cloud of smoke; it was his first time smoking, but he was already having fun, laughing with Alfred over it. Alfred reached over and took Kiku's offering. He, too coughed after his first breath. It was fun though—nothing was forced. No matter the circumstances, Alfred always seemed to give Kiku a good time.
"Kiku, look, there's this thing my dad does!" He then proceeded to fail at trying to blow rings, pouting a little. Kiku took the cigarette from Alfred's mouth, placing it in his own, talking in the process. "My dad does it when he thinks I'm not watching," He said, smiling a little. He blew a ring from the smoke, once, twice, three times. He then grabbed a pencil and threw it through the line, earning a cheer from Alfred and himself. He stopped out of surprise- he didn't think he'd be able to do it right away.

Alfred refused to give up, though. He succeeded in using up the rest of the cigarette. He took another out, blew more on Alfred, then gave it to him, getting up to change the record.

After letting the last few notes of Strawberry Fields Forever play, he removed the Magical Mystery Tour, instead putting on The Zombies, picking She's Not There. After a few more minutes of sharing another cigarette, Kiku jumped as if he forgot something, and took it off the record player.

"Alfred, you brought your favourite, right? Let me put it in."
He stared at the cover for a moment, making a face over to Alfred.
"W-What?!"
"Really, Fred? '61? That's so old... Like, eight years ago," He snickered with disdain. Shaking his head, he inserted Blue Hawaii regardless, sure not to break his new needle.
"Well, it was either this, or Pet Sounds. The Beach Boys, you know..."

Alfred sauntered over, putting it on his favourite song. After a moment, Kiku started dancing, grabbing Alfred's sleeve in indignation as he tried to sit. No way in hell was he letting him off that easy.
"Don't be boring, Alfred F. Jones. Dance... With me."
Alfred complied, nervously getting up to stiffly join him.
Kiku saw how tense he was, so he put his hand on his shoulder, bringing him close. Resting his head on his shoulder soon after, he was slightly startled when he heard Alfred singing along.
"Like a river flows, surely to the sea, darling so it goes, some things are meant to be," He sang shyly, surprisingly a good singer. Kiku smiled at him, looking up to meet his eyes through thick lashes.
"Take my hand, take my whole life too," He replied, giving Alfred a pleasant surprise. He didn't though Kiku didn't like "old" songs. He blushed, giving Kiku his hand.
"For I can't help falling in love with you," They sang in unison. Kiku smiled a genuine smile that reached his eyes, closing them. Feeling suddenly winded, he started laughing, his other hand finding Alfred's.
As the next song played, Alfred laughed, too.
"K-Kiku, I thought you didn't like 'old songs,'" He stammered, dumbfounded but excited. Kiku smiled and rolled his eyes, a look of feigned irritation on his face, looking away.
"My dad loves Blue Hawaii."

Kiku carefully gave the record back to Alfred, carrying it in such a manner as one would use with babies.
He looked through his own records, and Alfred's eyebrows shot up into his hair. Damn. Kiku had an excessive amount of records. The fact that his walls were painted maroon and blue really added to the whole 'spoiled' thing. Kiku seemed to be a brat, but didn't act it. And... Was that a giant poster of... George Harrison? He couldn't seem to decide which album to listen to. "Hmm... Freddie? Abbey Road, or Magical Mystery Tour?" He asked, reverting his gaze to Alfred.
Well, shit. He didn't listen to the Beatles as much as Kiku did, but he desperately didn't want to disappoint him. He liked new stuff, right? Magical Mystery Tour sounded a lot cooler, in Alfred's
eyes. He especially didn't want to when he called him 'Freddie.'

"Uh, Magical Mystery Tour?" It was more of a question, but Kiku accepted it nonetheless, his lips slightly pursed, as if it wasn't his favourite album.

Oh, shit.

He put it in, sitting in front of Alfred.

"Well, this one's actually a bit old. '67, you know. And Abbey Road came out this year," He said, looking over the psychedelic cover and moving his shaggy hair out of his eyes. Kiku heard the first notes of Blue Jay Way and quirked his thin eyebrows.

"Can you dig it?"

Even if Kiku had asked it, Alfred knew his eyes were really asking, dying to know, Can you dig me?

"Yeah, it's really boss, man..."

Kiku sat on the bed and talked to Alfred about his records, never looking away, shying away from those crystal eyes, mixing up his words a couple of times.

"Yeah, I would play Please Please Me, but... It's a little outdated," He frowned, handing a cigarette to Alfred. He rolled his eyes as he took a drag. He was pretty sure Please Please Me came out 1964.

Alfred was flustered at how happy Kiku got over songs, so just to make him feel good, he'd occasionally say things like, "That's bitchin'," or "Go cat, go!" whenever he'd start to sing or dance, or just nod to everything he would say, agreeing to all of the things he would spout off about the songs- he tried his best to listen, but when you were sitting with the cutest boy in your whole school, it made it kind of hard.

As Kiku put on his favourite song from the album, he stood up, taking both of Alfred's hands in his.

"How does it feel to be one of the beautiful people?" Kiku asked, meaning every word, even if it was just a line from the song.

The danced for a minute, forgetting all about singing, instead settling for frantically doing the twist, or busting a lung doing the Mashed Potato, and wildly laughing.

Suddenly Kiku stood straight, looking Alfred dead in the eyes.

"What did you see when you were there? Nothing that doesn't show," He sung, taking a breath for a second.

"Baby you're a rich man! Baby you're a rich man! Baby, you're a rich man, too!" He shouted, pointing at Alfred, who good naturedly laughed out loud. Kiku smacked his arm before continuing.

"You keep all your money in a big brown bag! Inside a zoo! What a thing to do!" He laughed, putting his head on Alfred's chest to rest for a moment, stifling a gasp at how firm it was. Why was he ever so shy?

Alfred watched Kiku finger through his albums, clicking his tongue as he was trying to find the one he was looking for. Kiku took out an album called Odessy And The Oracle, what Alfred knew to be The Zombies, something he hadn't really listened to very frequently. Sitting down, he watched him put it in, expecting him to sit beside him, but instead, was met with surprise as Kiku started dancing to the slow beat alone, hips imitating the slow, slovenliness time of the song, hips jerking every time the singer let out a tired breath, sometimes snapping his fingers.

Alfred watched him on the edge of the bed in complete silence, almost too afraid to move. Kiku started to sing along, voice deep and dragging.

"It's the time of the season,
When love runs high
In this time, give it to me easy," He said in an alluring voice, sneaking a look at Alfred. He lifted his hands in the air as he sang 'high'.

"And let me try with pleasured hands
To take you in the sun to....."
...Tell you what....
It's the time of the season for loving," He mumbled, groping the air with needy hands.
He let the music take over for a minute, no longer singing along. He seemed so into it, Alfred did not
want to start dancing by him.
Kiku suddenly looked at him and pointed a small finger at him.
"What's your name?" He sung suggestively, pointing at Alfred with wide eyes.
"Who's your daddy?" He asked seductively, flipping his arm over and bringing back a beckoning
finger to Alfred in such an irresistible way, eyes closing.
"Is he rich like me?" He purred the words carefully. He made sure Alfred heard every little sound he
made. From his small breaths, to the noise of his corduroy bell bottoms scraping together at the inner
thighs, to the light, miniscule noise of his shaggy hair falling onto itself, and all over his face.
"Has he taken
Any time
To show you what you need to live?" He sang in a breathy voice, pointing at Alfred once more.
Thank God his father wasn't home to hear it.
_Oh sweet Jesus, he definitely needed this to live._ Alfred crossed his legs, staring at the careless sway
of his hips. He felt himself go rigid- this was more pleasurable to watch than he'd like to admit- he
knew this was never meant to be taken lightly.

"Tell it to me slowly! Tell you what
I really want to know
It's the time of the season for loving," He mouthed, still swaying for his one man show, sometimes
bringing a hand to his hair.

He danced as if he did this everyday, occasionally clapping, as if Alfred wasn't even there, yet fully
aware of his presence, sneaking glances at the boy who was too infatuated- or too nervous to even
notice them. He was sitting at the edge of the bed, clinging to the end of his shirt for dear life.
If Alfred was standing, his legs would buckle- he felt weak in the knees. with such a sweeping
feeling in his stomach, a rush of ecstasy, he became startled, looking around. Well, there was no
other way to say it. Alfred was in another persons house, in front of Kiku, hard.
"Loosen up a little, Freddie," He said slyly, staring at the rigid way he sat. What exactly was he
hiding? Kiku knew, but he wanted to see it, almost wanted to feel it himself- even if he knew he
couldn't. Not yet, anyways. Slowly, he reached for Alfred's hands. He rested them on his shoulders
for a few seconds, letting him feel the slack movements.
Alfred felt like fainting every time he jerked his hips to the moment the singer let out a breath.

Slowly, he lowered them down to his chest, the palms of Alfred's hands resting right over Kiku's
nipples.
Still dancing, he kept them there, his hands on top of Alfred's, letting him feel him. He moved
forward a bit, closer to Alfred, still practically sighing the lyrics with a lustful breath. Kiku let the
effervescence take over him as he put his legs outside of Alfred's, trapping him between his legs. Still
swaying those hips of his to the slow beat, he lowered his hands even more, moving past his chest.
Alfred stiffened. No, no, no... As much as he wanted it, he already had an erection, and didn't want
to get even more embarrassed than he already was. Kiku moved his hands at a leisurely pace down
to rest on his moving hips, keeping them locked there with his own. He let him feel the lax
movements of his hips, the feelings in his heart (and another place), the thoughts in his head. If he
closed his eyes, it was calming, yet simultaneously insanely arousing. But no, it wasn't forced- Alfred
would've moved by now if he wanted to. He did a complete 360 turn, delighted to find Alfred's
hands still there.

"What's your name? Who's your daddy? Is he rich like me?" He asked, a playful smile on his face.
He put one hand on his shoulder, the other under his chin.
"Has he taken
Any time," He said, bending down to meet his face. "To show you what you need to live?" He said breathlessly, almost cutting off at the end. He was practically mumbling at this point, and didn't seem to have anymore interest in the song. He looked into Alfred's eyes, leaning in close. Alfred tensed up, staring back into what was normally dull. They were a bit brighter now, like staring into a clean lake.

The music played in the background, but Kiku was no longer singing, nor dancing. His hand was still under Alfred's chin, but their lips were so close it made Alfred a little nervous- why don't they kiss a little later? His sixteenth birthday was coming up really really soon, like next month soon... So maybe then...?

Tell it to me slowly
Tell you what
(I really want to know)
It's the time of the season for loving

Kiku moved his hand from his shoulder to behind his head. He looked deeper into Alfred's eyes, making him tense for a second. It was as if Kiku could see everything about him- he was reading him, like it was nothing. Alfred didn't like being read- but if it was Kiku doing it, it was okay, even welcomed.
And Kiku loved what he saw; every bit of it. Kiku didn't ever think he would feel that way about anyone. But as he looked into the hesitant eyes of the boy in front of him, and he was all he could see, Kiku couldn't deny the fact; ever since he had met Alfred, he was gone. He was beyond saving. And he didn't want to 'be saved', if there was even such a thing.

He leaned in, his nose touching the other's, a peculiar feeling.
At this moment, Alfred seemed to finally give in, to click. He moved his right hand (both were stuck in place) to the small of Kiku's back, leaving the other at his hip. Closing his clear blue eyes, he anticipated the kiss he knew was going to come.
"Knock knock knock!"
Kiku practically jumped, running over to his record player. He fumbled around with it, making the scene seem somewhat natural. The door opened to reveal a slightly taller Asian man, keys still in hand.

"I brought home pizza! Oh, who's this?" He asked, looking at Alfred in surprise. He didn't think he'd bring a friend home.
Kiku was still turned away from him, probably hiding more than an angry face at being interrupted. It was the first time Kiku could recall ever being mad with his father.
Alfred, more relieved than annoyed quickly offered his hand.
"I'm Alfred, A-Alfred F. Jones, Kiku's best friend!" He said, still sitting on the bed. He couldn't stand without embarrassing and revealing himself, and there was no way in hell he'd do that. He answered for Kiku, knowing he wouldn't, glancing at him through worried eyes.

Yao stood dumbfounded, taking his hand, marveling at the strong grip and handsome face he was met with.
"What a nice grip," He remarked, laughing lightly. He admired his earnestness and his seemingly endearing nature. He seemed like an ok kid.
"Well, you two can share this, I'm full from lunch, haha," He said, jerking his thumb to the staircase. Kiku knew what Yao was thinking. Give him his food and go.

As the door closed lightly, Kiku finally turned to face Alfred, praying Alfred wouldn't look any further than his face. They looked at each other's urgent, flustered faces and began to laugh,
nervously at first, then developing into stomach destroying laughter.

By the time they were done eating, Alfred knew it was time for him to leave. "See you at school tomorrow, Kiku!" He smiled, waving as he walked away.

Well. He'd think about this one for a while.

Needless to say, it was the best Sunday Kiku had ever had.

Chapter End Notes

Yeah, if you've never heard it, listen to The Time Of The Season by The Zombies. I know you're too lazy, but consider listening to Martha, My Dear. It's short, but it's a sweet song.

Haha, I the twist and the mashed potatoes are dances in the sixties. The twist is an easy one everyone thinks of when they think of sixties dancing, and the mashed potato is, too, I suppose, but I can really see them doing the mashed potato together for some reason. That, and I am tired of looking up and watching YouTube videos of sixties dances. But who knows, knowing me, I'll probably go back and edit other dances in over time.

Haha, I hope you can all infer this takes place during the Vietnam war, so that's why people are pretty racist to Kiku.

And this is fun/convenient to write since I live in Orange County, and I can just ask my dad and my (Asian) mom how it was back then, lol. Funnily enough, Orange County wasn't always a big city, but farmland, the majority being strawberry fields. And yeah, I know not all of America was like this, especially New York, but during/after the Vietnam War, Orange was the main place Asians immigrated to. But yeah, in this fic, Kiku and Yao are like, totally 100% American, haha. I bet Kiku says "Wang" like way-ng.

But since this takes place in the Vietnam War, in the sixties, that also means a lot of people didn't accept homosexuality, so that's why they're so secretive about it, although, the adults that were gay(even if they were straight tbh) were super overly flamboyant, so yeah. Another big reason Kiku was probably hated more than other people is because he's so wealthy, and probably more than a lot of the others at school, have it be white or Asian.

But anyways, if you're anything like me, slang is funny and fun to use, so I'll pretty much unintentionally overuse 60's California slang.

Also, sorry for the sucky selection of words and execution of things, alright guys?

(Video: Time Of The Season- The Zombies, 1968)

((I swear, Magical Mystery Tour is one of their best albums, but... The actual song is fucking weird.))
Part Three

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The warmth of your love
is like the warmth of the sun
and this will be our year
took a long time to come don't let go of my hand
now darkness has gone
and this will be our year
took a long time to come and I won't forget
the way you held me up when I was down
and I won't forget the way you said,
"Darling I love you"
You gave me faith to go on now we're there and we've only just begun
This will be our year
took a long time to come

Kiku laid in his bed with a huge smile on his face, singing along. Would him and Alfred ever be like this? Were they like that already? If they weren't... He'd love for it to happen. He was determined to make it his and Alfred's year.

They sat eating lunch together, alone in their own little desolate place. None of the school seemed to go there, even though it had such a beautiful view of the farmland.

Kiku took out his everyday lunch of rice and egg, pulling out chopsticks to go with it, an overall dull sense of routine. But since he had Alfred with him, he didn't get that old hoary feeling. For once, just for once, he wished he had something new to eat, not something so.... Jaded.

"Wah, are those chopsticks? Groovy!"
He turned his head to see Alfred animatedly pointing at his hands. Geez, with such a look, it made Kiku feel enlivened and almost titillated, even if this, too, was accompanied with a sense of everydayness. Though this was one thing Kiku was sure would never get old.

"Uh, yeah... Want to try using them?" He asked weakly, handing them to Alfred. With pellucid eyes fit for a child, he took them gently in his hands, staring at Kiku.
"C-Can I really...?" He asked brightly, those articulate eyes never failing to lose Kiku.
"U-Uh... Yes, sure..." He said, looking away. He couldn't afford to be blinded by looking directly at Alfred, not yet. Not at school.
Alfred was mainly happy he got to eat off of something Kiku used to eat, almost reminding him of sharing a cigarette with him, but better. This was food. It made his stomach full and happy, not giving his throat a scorched feeling.
For the next few minutes, Alfred tried but failed mercilessly at picking up a single grain of rice. This moment held an oddly reminiscent, an oddly fond moment to it, even if it had happened moments ago- was this what it was like to want to spend the rest of your life with a person?
"Look. Put one in your hand, and hold it like a pencil. Then-"
"Ugh, I'm trying!"
It was pretty fun until someone had to but in.

"Hey, Al, that chink rubbing off on you?" One of the boys from their English class yelled, smirking. Ugh, not him, Kiku thought. He was always one to be called out by Mr. Kirkland.
The boy threw the insults at Kiku, but completely missed, landing it on Alfred.

He immediately grabbed on Alfred's arm, the one clutching the chopsticks with a reliable hand, reminding Alfred to be level-headed.

"Alfred F. Jones. Don't. It doesn't even matter, see? I'm fine!" He said, forcing Alfred's head to look at him with a gentle hand, bringing him back to Earth. He didn't want Alfred to get in a stupid fight over him. A fight he'd lose, too, just because the other was too dense. But as the boy kept teasing, Kiku felt Alfred's arm tense up, and tried not to marvel at it's strength.

Stop it, Kiku. Wrong time! He thought, bringing a brisk hand up to his shoulder. Kiku's hand started to slowly tighten, trying to pinch some sense into Alfred.

"Ugh, Kiku, let me at 'em! You don't deserve that..." He said, his voice rather unaccommodating. Kiku tried his hardest not to roll his eyes.

"I know I don't! But it doesn't bother me, not anymore... Please, just don't waste your breath, or your time..." He almost wanted to end it with, "not on me", but knew how unfeasible Alfred would think it sounded. He knew how that would definitely drive Alfred at them, serving to only make the situation worse.

But the rock that was thrown next hurt more than any words could've, drew more blood than any insult could. Yes, it was fairly minor, just a nick above the eyebrow, but he couldn't deny how much it hurt.

Reacting to the pain, he felt those never ending tears forced out of him, the tears he so desperately didn't want Alfred to see- they were forced out, squeezed out by the rock that had just hit him, and he couldn't get over the initial shock of it.

All everyone ever did was tease, with words, a harmless thing. But never, never had they gone to such lengths to hurt him. Never had they wanted him to feel their hatred brought on by something irrational, something Kiku couldn't understand, no matter how hard he tried sometimes. Was having smaller eyes really that big of a big deal? Yes, many times he had hated himself just for being Asian, just for looking different, for having dirty blood.

But those days were long gone. Not only had Alfred made him feel beautiful, but he had shown him without even realizing how to think it, to feel it himself. He turned on the brain Kiku had all along.

And this? This wasn't something Kiku could stand for.

He reminded him constantly, just with simple looks with wonderment, of voices filled with joy- No, he wasn't ugly, no, he didn't have dirty blood, and yes, for the love of God, he did have a voice. And he was allowed to use it as loud as he pleased. This was the time to put it into good use.

"Fuck off! I'm right just the way I am, leave us alone!" He yelled with anger he didn't know he possessed, with a passion he didn't know he could use. There was nothing more he could really say, nothing else he could think of. He picked up the stone that still had some of his own blood on it, and with one last fleeting look at it, he threw it at the boy with as much determination he could possess, with as much strength as his anger let him.

Without even looking to see where it landed, if it drew blood or how he took it, he put his head in his picturesque hands, letting his shoulders shake, letting those tears fall- the anticipated tears of the pent up emotions he couldn't name, the tears that he had not been allowed to cry. He let a much needed wail escape his lungs, the groans of confusion, the whimper of sheer embarrassment out, the embarrassment of allowing this reach Alfred's ears. He couldn't care less about how the boy thought of it, but Alfred- Alfred!

Alfred, who seemed to be frozen in place by his own pragmatic head, had finally been brought back to breathe by the utter trepidation of hearing the other's cries- who did that to him? He looked
between the two at breakneck speed. Who to confront? Comfort, or hurt? Alfred rapidly took Kiku's fragile hands in his own, giving them kisses, not caring if the boy saw, if the world knew.

Kiku looked up from his spilt lunch, finding wetness on his hands he knew wasn't from his own eyes.

"K-Kiku! Are you alright? Do y-you need help?" He asked, hysteria taking over his voice. And his eyes, his eyes! Those crystalline eyes were full of tears, pouring over for the boy who stood shaking in front of him, trembling with what he couldn't place. Looking up, the blood from his wound forced his eye closed, flowing freely onto his eyelid, coating his full eyelashes, tears turning pink, taking away the blood. Trying to speak, he babbled something incomprehensible, bowing his head low. It hurt Alfred more than words could express- to see the grimace etched into his face, to see the tears in his eyes, the utter confusion at what to display. To know Kiku didn't want Alfred to see him. He didn't deserve to be hurt- he didn't deserve to be confused.

Even as Alfred ran after the boy, even as he gave him that last "fuck you", Kiku stood motionless, tears pouring down his cheeks.

Alfred had been crying.

Yes, Alfred had made Kiku laugh many times.

But Kiku had finally found someone to cry with.

"So... You gonna tell me what happened?" He asked, looking at his son through the rearview mirror. He had been driving in silence the whole ride, letting Alfred have his space.

Francis did not want to push his son into telling him anything, but the more he stared at his son's battered face, the sadder he got, the deeper the frown that hadn't left his face got.

Alfred had gotten in trouble for speaking out times before, as much as any other boy, but this was something Francis couldn't ignore; he knew Alfred was much too nice of a boy to get into a fight, much less have it serious enough to send him home, along with the bullied boy.

Alfred, after minutes of trying to ignore him, nodded in defeat. He couldn't hide anything from his father. Once he nodded, Francis slowly pulled over, then proceeded to turn over in his seat to face Alfred, a ready look on his expectant face. He wasn't mad at Alfred, knowing he raised him well enough to know Alfred did not pick fights over nothing.

"So...?" He was trying his hardest not to push it, but damn, Alfred's silence was really getting to him. It was worrying. He was close to never silent, only when he was sick, and even that was seldom.

"So... There's this boy... My best f-friend..." He started, pausing a bit. It was true, he was his best friend, but... Not exactly. They were more than that. But Alfred did not know how to phrase it, not wanting to lie to his father.

And Francis, Francis. He was trying his hardest not to roll his eyes. Did Alfred think he was born yesterday? He would not confront him about it, not yet, but Francis, too had played the 'best friend' card. He knew Alfred did not have many friends, anyways. Not any real friends, any that he liked.

Alfred looked as if a hot rod had pressed to his rear before continuing. "W-Well, anyways... He.. He's Japa- He has Japanese bl... He comes from Japanese decent," He said, struggling to find a good way to describe it. He could just imagine Kiku here now, wagging his finger in a scolding, almost motherly way- "Alfred F. Jones, you know I am as American as you!" He'd say, maybe even smacking him on the back of the head. The image of that in his head held an oddly reminiscent feeling to it, and that standing alone was enough to make him stop in his tracks, forgetting what the
Francis eyed that familiar blush warily.
"Continue."
Alfred looked up, trying to look anywhere but his father... Did his left shoe always have that mud stain?
"Well, his name is Kiku. Kiku Honda. He always gets teased, for ya know, looking different. But you know, he's the same as you and me, he's not different, in a bad way, anyways..." He said, not daring to look his father in the eye. He had never tried so hard not to blush in his fifteen years.

"Yeah, he has rice and egg everyday for lunch. He uses chopsticks, cool, right?! You know, he really hates drinking milk..." He said, that tense expression being wiped off of his face. When talking about his favourite subject, he tended to get sidetracked very easily. Suspiciously easy. Francis was already getting a headache. "...Alfred."
"Haha, yeah! Anyways!" He shook his head, remembering they were still on the side of the street. It was still only twelve, and he wanted nothing more than to take a nap.
"Ok, so we were at lunch, right? Well he takes out his chopsticks. And I'm like, 'That's choice, man, let me try!' So then he's like, 'ok', and hands them to me... But you know, they were hard to use," He said, really utilizing the traffic.

"So anyways, I was using them, right? And then, that boy," He said, suddenly going from his usual, laid back tone to something Francis could not place. There was a silent but sure fire in Alfred's eyes that he hadn't seen ever before on his son, and honestly never expected to.
"Just fu- just shouts, 'Hey Al, that chink rubbing off on you?' He isn't even Chinese!" He said, closing his eyes. Maybe, just maybe, if he closed his eyes, it would be a little less severe. What he couldn't see couldn't hurt him, right? He seemed much more hurt over this than Kiku. Kiku did not seem wounded in the least, apart from the gash on his forehead. His tears did not seem to be caused from cognitive hurt, and in the end, he was the one comforting Alfred, although he, too, had tears running down his cheeks. In the sense of things, it was always going to be that way.
"And- he, Kiku, was calming me down. Going, 'Fredd- Alfred F. Jones, don't you even try it.' And really, I was doing well, until... Until he threw the rock," He ended, his own anger cutting off the rest of the sentence.

He shook his head, holding his own hands. He was angry all over again- C'mon, Kiku wouldn't want this, think of him!
Riddled with the most intense set of emotions Alfred had ever acquired, more than he knew what to do with, he was prepared to ramble, to get even more angry.
"Alfred, tell me about Kiku," Francis said softly, a sound in his eye, a look in his voice that Alfred couldn't land.

He smiled in relief, his reddened face of anger being slowly but surely replaced by the pink of heartthrob. Well, now he could launch into a rant he would enjoy.

His heart had started feeling so many emotions ever since he had really given the time to really know Alfred personally. Not admire from afar, things like, "He's pretty cute," or "the loud one," or even "the raunchy one," at times. The music Kiku never stopped listening to had gotten more meaning than he ever thought they would since he met Alfred. Songs he just liked, songs he just considered plainly 'songs' had gotten so much more emotional than he could ever imagine. Every song was about Alfred- this was either a blessing or a curse. Songs about break ups and tears made Kiku cry now, thinking of Alfred. But good songs- they made him cry as well. But the tears drawn from his
eyes in those times were of happiness, not sadness.

That was his favourite part of it all. Kiku could be anyone he wanted; he could be the spoiled brat status made him, or the shy, gentle person he was at heart, and Alfred would still love him. He wouldn't let the war that split the two do them apart, no matter how hard it divided them.

All Kiku ever seemed to do was laugh or cry now- and as much as it scared the living daylights out of him, he was happy. He could finally feel. He no longer felt like a bag of meat, he no longer felt like purely his teasing, those harsh insults thrown at him. He felt like a real person with real emotions; and today, he had finally taken a stand- he had proved what he was meant to feel all along. Even feeling the throb of his eyebrow, the sting, it stirred something deep within his heart- It made him cry. Out of happiness, joy, out of pure love.
But he had gone sixteen years without them. Those perplexing things he felt now in his heart, his body, his very being, he had no way of knowing how to deal with them. It seemed his first initial thought, his first instinct was cry.
This was alarming to some people.

Setting the table much too large for just two people, Kiku sat, fiddling with his fork. Even if lunch hadn't even been served yet, he was waiting for it to be over. It seemed these days, he wanted to be alone at home.
Thinking of the events earlier in the day, he put his head in his hand, feeling the warmness welling in his eye spill over.

"Here Kiku, I- Oh, son, what's wrong?" Yao breathed, putting the dinner down dejectedly on the table, already forgotten. Kiku shook his head, feeling Yao's strong hands on his shoulders. He didn't even know why he was crying himself.
"...Is it those nasty kids at school? I swear, I have to talk to their parents... They don't know how to raise children..." He seethed, shaking his head fruitlessly. Why did people even bother having children if they couldn't raise them well? Why did his son have to suffer?
"N-No... I... I don't know..." He stammered honestly. But if he did know anything, he knew it wasn't because of them, or because of their rocks. He knew his long delayed tears could only be for the boy who hurt so much to see them. The boy, the person- whom he could cry and laugh with.
Yao couldn't think of how to comfort him any other way, but brightly proposed something.
"Kiku... I know you've always been a bit lonely, but... Tonight, you can stay at your friend's house, okay? Only if you want, that is," He said, resting his chin on Kiku's head. This was a hard thing to do- it felt as if he were somehow letting go.

Now we're there and we've only just begun
This will be our year
took a long time to come

The warmth of your smile
smile for me, little one
and this will be our year
took a long time to come

You don't have to worry
all your worried days are gone
this will be our year
took a long time to come

Kiku laid on his bed, placing his cat on his uneasy, whirling stomach. What would he do at school tomorrow, aft as if nothing happened? He wasn't too worried about the bullies, but... How would he
act around Alfred? Freaking out in front of him not only came with perks, but... A lot of downsides, too... Embarrassment being the worst.

He ran a shaky, clammy hand through his cat's long fur, listening to She's Not There on his record player- he couldn't bring himself to enjoy it at all. He almost broke the needle- and he didn't want to ask for another one if it did break, as careful as he was.

All he could think about was his father worrying about him, the way in which Alfred's tears fell, the way in which his lips quivered in the most devastating way. Yes, it flattered him that Alfred cared that much about him, and he knew he would be Alfred's demise to match Kiku's, but... Seeing Alfred cry in such a way was not worth any of it, not worth the smug confirmation. He could know and feel he was loved in other ways. Lifting his cat above his face, he looked her in the eye, slightly pouting.

"Sarah, what do I do?" He asked mindlessly, having no other confident. He shook his head when he received no answer, clutching her to his chest.

"K-Kiku!" He shouted, not even sure if he was being heard. Ugh- he didn't know how long he could keep this up, after all, the neighbors had ready started giving him strange looks.

If he could turn off that damn record player for two minutes! He thought, smiling in spite of his stern voice.

Just when Alfred thought his throat might tear, just when he thought that old lady was really gonna call the cops on him, a very disheveled Kiku appeared at the window- confusion and sleep still contorting his face.

Maybe he really shouldn't nap with the record on anymore...

Above the sound of music, Alfred was sure he could hear Kiku's small feet sending him down the stairs, possibly wearing shoes, like last time.

"A-Alfred? Why are you here...? My dad is at work right now... I..." He trailed off, taking in his surroundings. Alfred, as well as himself, looked very thrown together; A few of Alfred's buttons were in the wrong holes, and he was wearing his sweater inside out.

Kiku's hand instantly jumped to tuck a strand of hair behind his ear- how did he look? He had come to get the door just after waking up, and it seemed he did not even change out of his school clothes to take a nap. How much thinking had he done? It was very unlike him.

"Ahaha... Oh, shit... I didn't even brush my hair..." He said to the air, mainly to himself, not meaning for Alfred to catch it. But Alfred did; his eagerness had hands of it's own and caught the opportunity in the air, taking the chance he desperately wanted- no, needed. His desperation for physical contact had skyrocketed in the last two hours.

"Haha, it looks just as cute as it normally does, Kiku!" He beamed, taking the chance to rub his hair with his quavering hand.

"But, if you are looking for perfection..." He trailed off, raking distracted fingers through his hair.

Needless to say, Alfred had to wait outside for another half hour.

"F-Freddie... Slow down a minute..." He gasped, wheezing from the exertion on his legs. Maybe Yao not forcing him to be active wasn't such a good thing after all...

"So... Why are you bringing me to your house again?" He panted, trying to regain control of his uneven breathing. Looking around in a last-ditch effort of not seeing Alfred sweaty and panting, he found they had stopped at the strawberry field, the sunset bouncing off the water, complimenting the yellowness of Alfred's hair and clashing beautifully with the blue gaze of his eyes.

Oh God, he thought, shaking his head. Just close them.

He didn't know if he was thinking about his eyes or Alfred's, but if Alfred were to comply, he would desperately try to convince Alfred to stare at him again. Before, in the very beginning, it was for the attention. Now, it was for the love that his timorous look held. But everyday, it grew more sure, and Kiku loved that. Where would he stare at him today? The eyes? His hair, the way it fell? The lips
that never seemed to be unswerving anymore? The sure swing of his hips, his stomach? Or... His
eyes? His eyes, his favourite thing to look at? Kiku almost wanted to paint his walls the same color
of Alfred's eyes. That color made him feel so... So welcomed. It was a common color, a common
shade, something he had swooned over in other men, but... It was Alfred. The color was Alfred's
color, and he loved it. He didn't think he could any longer find it attractive on anyone else but him.

Running around with Alfred for nearly three months now had been taxing on his legs, his chest, his
heart. It had been taxing on his mind, no doubt about it. In so many ways he had mentally exhausted
Kiku, but... Kiku couldn't think of one single time it hadn't been invigorating, leaving his mind
feeling stimulated for hours on end. It was refreshing, to say the least.

Catching the steadiness of his breath, he stood up completely, putting his fine hands on Alfred's
broad shoulders.

Don't look at his shoulders... Just his face.

"Now Fred, why are you bringing me to your house?" He asked, a little afraid of knowing the
answer. He prayed his father wasn't angry with Kiku.

"Um, I kind of accidentally told my dad all about you, and he kind of really wants to meet you," He
said, rubbing the back of his neck. He didn't know if Kiku would be angry with him; he probably
gave away far too much. At least Francis didn't see how they normally acted with each other.
Kiku was completely silent at first- just how much did Alfred tell him? Going rigid, he was suddenly
very conscious of his actions. Oh God, his dad probably hated him... Why did Alfred have to say
anything?! Well, it was only fair, seeing as how Kiku did cause Alfred to get into a fight.
But...

That last part.

He told his father all about him? Him? And judging from the breathless sound in his voice, the
sweeping gaze of his eyes, he really enjoyed doing it- he had gone out of his way to tell someone all
about him, Kiku?!

Just that alone was all it took for the feeling in Kiku's heart to bubble over.

Laughter, lovely laughter. It was a peculiar thing, really. People laugh in all sorts of situations, Kiku
included. Stressful situations to console one's self, frightening situations birthed from the loss of
words, a despondent situation to pick one and others up, or... Situations like this. Perfect situations.

What was Kiku feeling? Relief? Happiness? Love...? Joy? There were not words in the English
language to encapsulated the feeling in his heart- an effervescent feeling, almost like... Birds taking
flight. Countless birds, a flock of birds, rising to the top in a frenzy, coming out of Kiku's mouth in
the form of music. Magpies, he knew these birds to be magpies; birds of joy.

Staring at Kiku, Alfred was taken hold of the feeling he was well acquainted with by now- the utter
love he felt for Kiku. But he could not properly express this; so his laughter rose as well, the laughter
birthed from the familiar loss of words.

"I-I'm sorry... I... I'm just really... Really happy!" Kiku said, nearly doubling over again.

Alfred, watching with some kind of wonderment, shook his head, bending down to put his head on
Kiku's shoulder.

"No wonder my dad wants to meet you," He breathed, picking his head up and resting his hands on
Kiku's shoulders.

Thank God no one else was there.

"H-How much do you think he's figured out?" Kiku asked, still a little dizzy from laughing so hard.
He didn't like the dizziness, but the feeling that accompanied it was a different story.

Alfred shook his head, a false defeat on his face, a frolicsome tone in his voice.
"Oh, all of it. I finish my speech about you, and he just goes. 'Best friend? So you like him?' And I just throw my hands up in the air and say, 'Aw pops, how'd you know?!!'" He said, mimicking his actions.

Kiku giggled as he watched Alfred laugh to himself, blue eyes shut closed.

Staring at Alfred next to the pond, he almost wanted to fall in backwards.

"Hey, listen. Do you want to hear a secret?" Kiku asked, looking over Alfred with scrutinizing eyes.

Alfred looked back with an almost adamant glare. He nodded, curious as to what it was. If Kiku was only just saying it, it must be big.

"Promise not to tell?" He asked, tucking a strand of his hair behind his ear. Even if he had taken the time to brush it, it was now so windswept it was probably worse than waking up.

Alfred rolled his eyes. If it wasn't obvious enough. His curiosity took over, and he wasn't going to stall with Kiku.

"Yeah, man, what is it?" He asked, starting to get a little nervous. How bad could it be?

"Come closer." He instructed, suddenly grabbing Alfred's elbow and quite literally dragging him towards him. Alfred didn't have any time to register his surprise, as he found his lips at Kiku's ear, and he found they had gone dry.

Subconsciously, he licked his lips, realizing this was as close to Kiku as he had ever gotten. And he had a sudden hunger- one he couldn't ignore. All he wanted was to get closer, to just take Kiku into his arms, to hold him there for God knew how long.

As Kiku whispered it, he was sure he could feel his lips move against his hair, slightly brushing his ear.

"Alfred F. Jones, I am completely in love with you."

In a hurry, Alfred pulled away, searching his face. Kiku did not look frightened; in fact, he looked more resolute than Alfred had ever seen him. He looked up to that firm gaze in his eyes, that unwavering look, waiting for his answer.

Alfred laughed, feeling the tears that he hadn't stopped shedding since lunch prick his eyes.

"Kiku, that's no secret!"

Completely turning the tables, Alfred gave him no time to register his shock. All Kiku ever seemed to do to Alfred was take him off guard, to throw new things at him, but this; it was Kiku's turn to feel that pleasant shock course through his body.

Closing the gap, Alfred pulled Kiku in for a bruising kiss, finally getting to search those silken pair of lips. Yes, yes, they were soft. Much more than Alfred ever thought they'd be. More than he thought was possible. This long awaited touch, the 'delayed' display of each other's affection seemed to come just at the right time; they were alone, and it didn't feel rushed, or desperate. The sure way in which Kiku's mouth moved against his in consonance, was the indication of their perennial affection of one other; the plain fact of love.

Pulling away, Kiku began to laugh, despite the lack of air in his lungs; he felt so winded, so windswept by Alfred, his laughter was uncontrollable; it came straight from his heart. His eyes were closed, squeezed shut in this joy he was feeling.

But Alfred couldn't seem to close his eyes. He couldn't stop looking at Kiku, searching him over, loving the little details. He loved the smile lines he hasn't noticed before, the slight upturn in his eyebrows, the crookedness of his smile and teeth.

Although his lips were red and a bit swollen looking from Alfred, they still looked beautiful, still looked so... So picturesque. The golden rays of the sun complimented his face so well, Alfred could not do anything but stare at him; they tiny movements of his hair, the small lines complimenting his smile. He reached out a hand rendered weak from excitement to touch his lips, the trace them with
his fingers. He was a little upset he had stained his lips with those red marks, but... Proud he left a mark. Something Kiku would remember.

Kiku reached up to rest his hand on Alfred's, letting him feel his lips. They stung a bit, but... Kiku was happy. It was a reminder of Alfred.
"...Beautiful, aren't they?" He said, looking up to Alfred. It seemed his had left his own mark, as well.

Alfred nodded, unable to speak. He had a knot in his throat, and... He didn't want to ruin the serenity of the moment by crying. He grabbed Kiku's hand in both of his with a thrill, his eyes exuberant, his hands dwarfing Kiku's petite ones in size.

"I... I love you, I love you, I love you! And... And you love me too!" He said, pulling Kiku in a hug, smashing his face into his shoulder. He could stay in that position for hours, just feeling Kiku's breath and his contented sigh.

Kiku nodded, that watery smile still on his radiant face. "You haven't got a clue."

*And I won't forget*
the way you held me up when I was down
and I won't forget the way you said,
"Darling I love you"
You gave me faith to go on

*Now we're there and we've only just begun*
and this will be our year
took a long time to come

Yeah we only just begun
yeah this will be our year
took a long time to come

Alfred bent down to rest his forehead on Kiku's eyes still wide open, Kiku's shut. Kiku smiled, tears of joy glistening on his eyelashes. "My... My dad would kill me," He laughed, shaking his head. It wasn't funny, it wasn't. Both of them knew that, but in spite of it, despite of how sad it truly was, they laughed together, letting themselves not care for a day.

Kiku pulled away, only to pull Alfred in another kiss- a bit softer this time, but still a bit fiery nonetheless. It was short, not long like the last one, and pulling back to look at his work, Kiku smiled as he inspected Alfred's grin, somehow elegant, seeing the redness he could feel on his own. Once again, he couldn't ignore those eyes that so resembled a cloudless day in the sky, although they could be harsh when they needed to be.

He was so handsome.
He smirked, Alfred almost knowing his thoughts before they came out. "Alfred F. Jones, you are by far the handsomest boy I've ever had the pleasure of seeing," He laughed, wiping at his eyes. He wanted to see Alfred better.

Alfred gave a smirk to match, nudging Kiku with his elbow playfully, already switching gears. "That giant George Harrison poster in your room begs to differ," He said, rolling his eyes at the thought of it. Honestly, how was Kiku's father not suspicious of him?

"George Harrison ain't got nothing on you."
The feeling of the day couldn't subside - it was almost as if he had snuck out with Alfred all over again. The events from the first day Kiku Honda could ever recall living was still fresh in his mind, running alongside him with it. And he applied those feelings to his situation now. The breathless feeling from running away from danger, the taste and scent of the wind engulfing him, the simple thrill of holding hands with someone other than your dad for once, was magical, to say the least. The light that had never shone on him before now shone brightly on he and Alfred F. Jones, nearly succeeding in blinding him. He believed the light was from none other than Alfred himself; but did that mean that what was shone on Alfred was shed from Kiku as well? The way in which his eyes glinted as clearly as the lake they stood in front of could only make Kiku guess the answer was yes.

Alfred dragged Kiku by the hand to the back way of his house, no longer nervous or afraid of doing so. They walked at a liesurely pace, occasionally pecking the other on the face. Kiku seemed to like doing it everywhere but his mouth, starting another war between the two. Another Kiku was sure he'd win.

Seeing the sun starting to set already, Alfred turned suddenly to the boy holding his hand, swinging it a bit out of what could've been boredom. Kiku was relieved his father had agreed to let him stay with him tonight.

"Kiku, w-we really have to go! I didn't realize how much time we spent at the field...!" He hissed, looking at how far they had to go from where they were. It wouldn't make him tired, but it sure as hell would be inconvenient to be so late. He knew Kiku wouldn't be willing to run the rest of the way, so examining his figure, he put his hand to his chin.

"...Kiku, how much do you weigh?" He asked, not knowing or not caring how that sounded in the other's ears.

Kiku looked down at himself with an indignant look, and brought a hand to his stomach, beginning to feel it frantically.

"Wha- Alfred-"

"Oh, it doesn't matter. Up you go, then!" And with that, he swept Kiku up by his slim waist, throwing him over his shoulder with strong arms, laughing fraudulently.

Kiku nearly had the wind knocked out of him, and his first instinct was to claw at Alfred's back. After the initial shock at feeling the strength of Alfred's hands and arms, and damn, how it hurt when he hit his head on his back, he restrained from feeling up his back. As he hit his face on his back with the impact, causing a red spot to bloom on his forehead, matching the cut above his eyebrow.

"Alfred F. Jones! Don-"

"Ow, Ow! Don't scratch me! And don't worry, now we'll get to my house on time!"

As Kiku put his hands to his face as Alfred ran, sighed, looking at the orange sky. How'd I get so lucky?

Shrugging in ease, he felt the cut that still stung.

This'll definitely be our year.

Chapter End Notes
(Video: This Will Be Our Year- The Zombies, 1968)
Haha, I know everything in this fic is cliche/lame/badly written, but they're young, horny, and teenagers in a mainly homophobic society, so I'm not gonna beat myself up too much over it.
He put Kiku down hurriedly in front of the house, flattening his clothing.

"Man, haha... I really hope Pops didn't see that... He'd be mad at me, oh Lord," He said, shaking his head. He knew his father would scold him, probably saying something along the lines of, 'This is why Kiku is not your boyfriend!' He shook his head at the thought of being humiliated in front of his crush and his little brother.

"Um, my dad is a bit, uh... Eccentric, so don't... Just... Sorry if you get a little uncomfortable," He said carefully, troubled eyes finding Kiku. But Kiku merely chuckled and shook his head, a coltish tone coming from him.

"Alfred, have you met my dad? And I'm sure he can't be that bad... He... He tolerates this..." He said, gesturing down at their joined hands, Kiku swinging them a little. Smiling at them, he looked up again, asking the question that has been on his mind since the strawberry field today. Alfred almost wanted to say that being okay with gay relationships didn't automatically make someone an okay person, but decided against it, staying silent. He did not want to ruin the good feeling that had not rubbed off since their kiss.

"So, like... Is your dad gay?" He asked a little hurriedly, already embarrassed at having the question pass his lips. He never really wanted it to go farther than a thought, a question, but he was just dying to know. Very rarely were people other than themselves tolerant of it. And Kiku was excited to know. He was about to meet him, after all.

"Oh, haha. I... It goes both ways for him, though I think he leans a little more towards men..." He said, laughing a little. Yes, Alfred had a mother, but Alfred didn't think Francis loved her. Not in a romantic way, anyways. He probably loved her in the same way in which he loved his children, or in a way in which one would love their best friend.

With a sudden realization dawning on him, he looked to Kiku, hand on his chin.

"Say... Is today Friday?" He asked, a nervous smile suddenly grabbing hold of his lips, his hand suddenly slack in Kiku's hand. Kiku knitted his eyebrows in confusion at this, a little concerned. Didn't everybody love Fridays?

"Uh, well, yeah, why-"

"Boys! I've been sitting here watching you talk outside in the cold for forever, here, come in! Don't catch a cold!"

Kiku jumped away from Alfred, subconsciously ripping his hands out of Alfred's. They both flinched at the way their hands felt so empty and cold, also finding how sweaty their hands were. But... Really, how long had they been standing outside?

Francis ushered them in with good natured hands, mumbling soft chastisement to Alfred for being home so late. Kiku stared at him, not even registering he was doing so. Not only did he have a strange accent, he was... Well, he was extremely handsome. Kiku blushed and looked down. If Alfred and Francis were this handsome, how would his brother look?

"Aw, papa... It's not cold outside, it's summer...!"
Sitting at the table, Kiku thought he might’ve gotten a whiplash from their house. Not only were there excessive amount of pictures of Alfred and Mathieu lining the walls, the walls were painted yellow and orange. Kiku got a bit dizzy just from looking around, although it was sweet they had such a... Homely, unique feel to it. The smaller size of their house helped make it feel cozy, not cramped. Kiku thought he would like to have a small house such as Alfred's but he knew he probably would have room for all of his belongings.

The walls in Kiku's house were painted cooler colors, making everything seem very drab and dreary, making everyone who came sleepy, although in Kiku's house, Yao had hung up many pictures of Kiku as well, adding to the 'spoiled only child' bit.

"Kiku? That's you, yes? The sweet boy Alfred told me all about?" He asked, shaking his hand vigorously. Francis was acting as if he were meeting a movie star, and Kiku was half expecting Francis to ask for an autograph.

Kiku enjoyed the enthusiasm, shaking it back with his own firm grip. His father always reminded that a 'sure shake and a firm grip' told people one was confident, and eye contact was important as well. But... Francis' blue eyes were bright and limpid like Alfred's, so he found himself shying away from it, looking up from his hands to his eyes in a flurry, making himself dizzy.

"Haha, I'm sorry, I'm going off soon. But, I did make dinner!" He said, walking around the kitchen. He seemed so... So full of energy. So hyper. So... Eccentric. A bit like Alfred. He balanced all three plates in his hands, giving them to Kiku, Alfred, and leaving one in a vacant spot. Francis eyed the spot in irritation with his child like eyes, directing them to Alfred next.

"Ugh, Alfred call you br- Mattie! Descendre ici! Dinner!" He yelled, poking his head up the staircase, his long pale hair falling down to his shoulder blades in a ponytail. Kiku stared at the way it shimmered in the light; It was long, like his own father's, but... It was blond, and wavy. Kiku found it very attractive.

Soon, Kiku saw a boy who looked almost exactly like Alfred run down the stairs, almost tripping. He, too had glasses, but his were a lot rounder than Alfred's, making Kiku giggle. He saw him to have hair like Francis', but a bit more like Alfred's color. "Papa, I don't know French...!" He said in a tired tone, as if he had to remind him everyday. Shaking his head, he looked around, looking up once he saw dinner being served and an unfamiliar guest. Francis pouted at this, ruffling his son's messy hair.

"Aw, but you should know what that means, I've told you! Well, anyways, here's dinner, I've got to get dressed!" He said, grabbing an apple from the counter. Alfred sat down, not paying much attention to his surroundings, grabbing his knife and fork with much enthusiasm. Mathieu's thick eyebrows shot up in interest, and he held out his hand for Kiku to shake, offering a vigorous hand shake to mimic his father's.

"Wow! Are you Kiku? Alfred tells me about you!" He said excitedly, his eyes glittering in excitement. Looking up to meet his eyes, Kiku recoiled, seeing those stars Alfred had.

It seemed they didn't have visitors often.

"Yes, I am. Does he now?" He said, shaking Mathieu's hand, shooting a sly look over to Alfred. Mathieu nodded, sitting down across from Kiku, animatedly picking up his own fork. Would Kiku now have two people to talk his ear off?

Surprisingly, Mathieu sat in silence, seemingly waiting for Kiku to start. Registering this signal, Kiku looked down at his meal. Wow, steak and potatoes, how fancy... But, there was something wrong. He cocked his head as Alfred did, trying not to rudely stare at his food.
"Uh, Alfred... Can I put this in the microwave a bit longer?" He asked in confusion, prodding Alfred with his fork. Alfred looked over at him with an equally confused expression. Microwave? Was Kiku so spoiled he didn't know not to heat these things up with a microwave?

"Uh, microwave? And why? What's wrong with it?" He asked, examining his own food with a troubled face.

He looked Kiku's plate over, checking his food. Everything seemed normal, but Kiku looked at him like he was stupid, gesturing to his plate as well, making Alfred stare at him with an almost indignant look on his face.

"It's not cooked enough... It's still bloody, isn't that a health hazard?" Kiku rambled, sending a worried glance to Alfred, who had already wolfed down a good portion.

Alfred could've laughed. He thought for a second he was joking, but knowing Kiku, he didn't do such things very often. Not about food, anyways. Alfred had found Kiku was very serious on food. He almost wanted to say, "Man, haven't you had rare steak before?" But as he saw Kiku start to get more and more red from embarrassment at asking a 'stupid question', he shrugged, looking between Kiku and Mathieu.

"Uh.. Haha, mine too," He said weakly, putting his fork down. Mathieu looked at Kiku sympathetically, offering his own plate. "It's rare steak, Kiku, but here. Mine is a bit more cooked, I haven't eaten any," He said, scooting his plate over to Kiku. Alfred shot him a look, a threatening look as if Mathieu had just made fun of him. But Kiku smiled graciously, surprisingly not protesting at such a suggestion. Alfred sighed in relief. At least his crush and his brother got along well.

Francis came down from the room, now dressed nicely. He wore a loose button up shirt with long sleeves tucked into checkered bell bottoms, all to top it off with... Heeled shoes? Seeing him down, Alfred waved to him, gesturing to the record player in the living room.

"Hey, pops! Kiku-"

"Oh, that's right! You like music, right, Kiku? Here," He hastened over too the living room and began busying himself over a red record player, very different from Kiku's yellow one. As Kiku quietly thanked him and stepped on Alfred's foot, he heard the notes to the song he knew to be Summer Wine.

"Ooh, my dad listens to this song!" He said, starting on his potatoes. Francis looked over fondly at him, wanting to rustle his hair already. He had always gotten so attached to children, have it be one at a store, or one of his sons' rare friends.

"He has good taste, then," He said, winking at Kiku. Geez, he already wanted to consider the boy his son. Kiku looked down, a little flustered, almost able to read his thought exactly.

"Okay kids, well, I gotta jam. I won't be home until morning, you know it. Have fun, but not too much!" He said good naturedly, grabbing his keys. Still talking, he opened the door.

"Remember, don't open the door for anyone!" He said in a sudden scolding tone, instantly reminding Kiku of Yao. Maybe they would get along...? Shutting the door and saying his "I love you"s, he left them alone, leaving the house feeling so... So quiet. But knowing Alfred, Kiku knew he'd fill that space quickly.

"Oh, I know you're wondering, so I'll tell you. It's Friday, so he's going to the club, picking up women and men. He's a magnet," He said in a mischievous voice with a smirk to accompany it, nudging Kiku with his elbow. Kiku laughed, thinking of Francis going to those clubs, probably
dancing to the disco music. It was probably the accent that made him so desirable.

Kiku spoke his thoughts, again taking himself off guard. "Your dad is so cool."

Mathieu giggled, putting his plate away. He wiggled his eyebrows, sitting back down. "He loves the British ones."

Hanging out with Alfred and even Mathieu, Kiku had learned new things about Alfred's family. Mathieu was fourteen, and their mother was dead, like Kiku's. He also found how shy Mathieu was, but how fun he could be. The two brothers were actually very similar in many ways, but they seemed to display and act on things drastically different.

At times such as these, Kiku wished he had a sibling. He had never given it any thought, enjoying being an only child and thoroughly spoiled, but, now... It seemed fun to have a sibling. Thinking on it, Kiku very much would've liked to have a younger sister or brother.

Waking up the next morning in an unfamiliar room much smaller in comparison to his own had startled Kiku, and he sat up, looking down at Alfred through his hair. Taking in his surroundings and looking around, he remembered he had spent the night, ate a bloody steak, got a rock thrown at him, and... Got kissed. And kissed back.

Pale hand jumping to his lips, he felt them over, remembering how Alfred had been there only hours ago. Looking down at him, he felt a strong desire to do so again, but ignored it.

When he wakes up, he thought, getting off the bed, suddenly very awake despite rising only a few moments ago.

Picking up Alfred's horsehair brush, he tried brushing his hair with it, a little disappointed when it made his hair extremely straight, making his bangs tickle his eyelashes. Wincing at the way it dug into his forehead, he set it down, settling down on examining it.

He sneered at the brush, seeing golden strands of hair in it, and promptly tried taking it out with his fingers. Pricking his fingers multiple times, he finished, the brush looking completely new. Sighing in content with his work, he set the brush down, and walked over to the bed, sitting back down next to Alfred.

Staring at those golden locks of hair made him smile, thinking of what a pain it was to take out of the brush. He subconsciously moved a piece of it out of his face, startled at the texture. Kiku's was silky, but... Alfred had baby hair. Suddenly taking his other hand from his lap, he ran the other threw his hair in interest and affection, finding some knots from sleep. Kiku's hair never knotted. Forgetting Alfred was a light sleeper, he examined it a bit more, letting it glide between his fingers, bringing another searching hand to his own. Kiku's hair would slip through his fingers, and felt silky and coarse, but Alfred's was a bit more kinky, and felt like a baby's, it was so... Fine. Not to mention, it was golden. That was a big perk for Kiku.

Noticing a blue eye staring at him, he pulled his hands away from him in a flurry, not knowing how to play it off this time. Taking his hands from him and using them to tuck a strand of hair behind his own ear, he looked away as Alfred sat up, studying Kiku's face, taken by surprise, seeing how red it was.

"So... What were you doing?" Alfred asked in a confused voice that was forced, nudging Kiku's side with his elbow. Kiku turned to him, eyebrows knit in what seemed to be frustration.
"Oh, don't give me that, you were awake the whole time," He said, rolling his eyes, flattening out his shirt. Alfred snickered, hearing the New York accent he'd always expected come out. But it made him frown; did he usually hide it from people, or did California rub off on him?

Reaching over, he ruffled Alfred's hair, making it even worse than it already was, somehow managing to do so with that same annoyed expression. Chuckling a bit at this, Alfred reached over to touch his hair as well. His hand faltered a bit at the touch, hesitating at the quality. It was so smooth, and like silk; although it was impossible to ruin. But despite this, Alfred was still nervous at touching it; it seemed so perfect his hands would stain it.

Kiku reached up and took Alfred's hand in his own, taking Alfred by surprise. "You don't have to be so hesitant, Freddie," He said playfully, bumping Alfred's knee with his own. Not exactly knowing what to do, nor able to come up with a clever comeback, he sat in place, avoiding Kiku's eye.

Noticing this, Kiku put his hand under Alfred's chin, bringing his head up, making their eyes meet, Alfred seeing Kiku slightly pouting.

Without another moment of hesitation, Kiku brought his lips to Alfred's smiling into the kiss when he felt Alfred jump a bit. Bringing a delicate hand to the back of Alfred's head, he slowly felt his hair, feeling the way it stuck up slightly in the back.

Pulling away, Kiku looked into his eyes, happy to find how sire his eyes looked, smiling, he put his head on Alfred's chest, chuckling a bit to himself.

Alfred tensely put his hand on Kiku's head, trying to chuckle a bit with him. Alfred had to take a good look around, settling his eyes on Kiku.

And all the while, one sentence rang out from their thoughts into the atmosphere of the room.

_How the hell did I get so lucky?_

Getting driven back home by Francis was fun. It was noon, and it was a lot later than Kiku expected to go home. He hoped his father wouldn't be too angry with him. Alfred knew Kiku was thankful for having Alfred in the backseat with him. When Francis announced he'd be driving Kiku home, Kiku's eyes nearly popped out of his sockets.

To be in a car, to converse with a man who was practically a stranger? His crush's dad?

It was then Alfred had volunteered coming along.

Walking Kiku to his doorstep, Alfred restrained from holding Kiku's hand, with the knowledge that his father and possibly Kiku's father was watching them. They walked up to the steps, a knowing silence passing between them, until Kiku decided to break it. Looking at the position they stood, there was a tree blocking the view of the car. Kissing Alfred on the cheek, he got his keys out, waving to Alfred. Looking at the expression on Alfred's face, he chuckled, shaking his head in a humorous way. "Don't worry, my dad isn't home, and yours can't see us."

Alfred paused for a minute, turning back around. "Kiku!" He called, seemingly shouting despite Kiku being two feet from him.

"Are... Are we like... Boyfriends?" Alfred asked, his face reddening by the second.

By the way Kiku stood dumbfounded for a moment, Alfred was afraid, sure he'd say no. The way Kiku started laughing next made him shift, not exactly being able to read it. But as Kiku stopped laughing, and noticed Alfred practically shook, hands stiffly at his sides. Running up to Alfred, he threw his arms around him, practically jumping on him, taking him into another deadly hug.

Alfred could not see his face, but felt him nod, sure he was smiling in a way he would love to see.

"I thought you'd never ask. Yes, Alfred."
Pulling back, he let Alfred inspect that crooked smile of his, Kiku admiring Alfred's picturesque, straight smile, showing those white teeth.

_God, he's handsome._

Francis almost pleadingly questioned why Alfred was so smiley the whole silent car ride home, earning the simple answer of "Nothing" at most, no matter how persistent he'd be. He was not only recalling having his hair played with the moment he had woken up, being kissed for the first time, being hugged, that breathless feeling that he had gotten from both times at the strawberry field. Even dancing with Kiku to California Dreamin' yesterday gave that feeling. It seemed Kiku never failed to give him that feeling; that winded feeling, startling but pleasant all at once. It was almost the feeling of literally being swept off of your feet, or being on a roller coaster, which were the only ways Alfred could describe it. Either way, thinking of it made Alfred want to run around, to surf, or to listen to the Beach Boys.

Burrowing himself in his room, he put Animal Sounds into his own record player, letting the songs play as he laid back on his bed, letting the songs make pictures start in his head. He always liked music as much as the other person, usually using to concentrate and whatnot, or just simply liking it. He didn't have many records, to say the least.

But ever since he became friends with Kiku, he loved them. They were like little _treasures_ now, much like many other things since he had met him. School was no longer null and void, something that felt required. No, school was like a little treasure now, and he no longer just saw it for pointless learning and science class. No, now there was Kiku, and English class, and even math. If Kiku made Alfred excited for math class, Alfred really knew that meant Kiku was special.

He looked up at his white ceiling, quietly singing along.

"*Happy times together we've been spending*
_I wish that every kiss was never ending_*
_Wouldn't it be nice,"_ He sang, thinking of Kiku. Another thing he tended to do recently apply everything to their relationship.

Kiku had only kissed him twice, and he _already_ wished every kiss would be never ending.

"Maybe if we think and wish and hope and pray it might come true
Baby then there wouldn't be a single thing we couldn't do
We could be married
And then we'd be happy
Wouldn't it be nice
You know it seems the more we talk about it
It only makes it worse to live without it
But lets talk about it
Wouldn't it be nice..." At this point, it sounded as if Alfred were talking, no longer singing. Faltering at the end, he sat up, wondering what Kiku would make of that.

He laughed a little, applying the lyrics to his own life.

Married? To Kiku? He shook his head, scoffing at his own foolishness. It was a nice thought... But was it realistic? Them, two men, to be married? Like _that_ could ever happen. Especially not with Kiku's dad.

Shaking his head at these embarrassing thoughts, he tried not to let his mind wander.

Waking up next to him every morning, cooking breakfast with him at wee hours of the morning, having a dog or a cat together. Going to fourth of July parades with him, eating carnival food. Dancing late at night, _getting old with him._

Alfred's coughing was heard all the way to the kitchen.

Seeing each other at school on Monday was eventful, to say the least. The strained laughter and
strained looks would cause them to gain dubious stares. The amount of effort it took to not kiss each other or constantly have their hands on each other was mentally straining and ridiculous to say the least, seeing on the amount of students at their school.

Eating lunch in their normal desolate area, they sat down confidently, sure no one would bother them in their spots after the events of Friday. Taking out his lunch, he pulled out his chopsticks, and with a grin on his face, he pulled out a second pair, handing them to Alfred with delicate hands.

Alfred's face lit up again, and he made grabby hands towards them, taking them with gentle care. Kiku took out his lunch, setting it between them.

"Haha, I asked my dad to pack two pairs today... I didn't actually expect him to do it," He said, chuckling feebly. Tucking his hair behind his ear, a nervous habit, he felt his fingers brush the bandaid on his forehead. Hoping Alfred didn't catch the shock and disappointment on his face, he quickly took his pair to his hands, not giving Alfred time to register the fault in his face. If he moved quick enough, it didn't happen.

"U-Uh, here, like this, Fred," He started, demonstrating with his own hands. Holding them up, he tried out teaching. "Okay, so... Put on of them in your hand, like this... You have to hold it like a pencil," He said, doing just that. Looking over at Alfred, he nudged Alfred's knee with his own. "No, no, like a pencil. See, like this?" He indicated the correct way, slowly pinching his chopsticks in midair. Picking up a single grain of rice, he put it in Alfred's mouth, and picked up another, placing it in his own. He smiled a toothy grin at him, restraining from reaching over and ruffling his hair.

Alfred smiled back, a strange look in his eye. It looked almost... Sad? Trying to mask it as much as possible, he bowed his head a bit, laughing at his own inability to use chopsticks. Seeing this, Kiku frowned, setting his own pair down. He put his hand under Alfred's chin, lifting it up to allow him to search his gaze. As Alfred met his eyes, he understood Kiku's gaze perfectly, reading, "Do you really think that after all this time, you could fool me?"

He bowed his head a bit, letting his eyes graze over Kiku's lunch box. "Well, haha... I just... I'm sorry this happened to you." Kiku felt Alfred's thumb pass over his forehead, and he tried not to wince from the way it stung a bit, even three days later. He leaned into Alfred's hand, sighing in content. Honestly, his father wanted to keep him home that day. He was babying Kiku more than usual since it happened, and he couldn't deny the fact that he had been letting him, even sometimes enjoying it. And truth be told, he was going to let himself stay home—after such a good weekend, he didn't want to face yet another school week. But with the knowledge that summer vacation was rapidly approaching, in another few weeks, he didn't want to miss out on anymore school time with Alfred. That, and final exams were this week. He did not want to miss that. But with the thought of summer vacation approaching, and the school year ending, the knowledge of countless afternoons spent with Alfred accompanied it. Just picturing them spending time together in that field, or Kiku watching Alfred surf made him want to get over the tenth grade quickly.

Kiku eyed him with puzzlement, not exactly liking that look of empathy on his face. Come on, it was just a rock. A few days ago, too. Why did Alfred need to feel bad? He wasn't the one who had thrown it. Kiku sighed, tucking some more hair behind his ear. "...It's alright now, Alfred. It already happened. I learned something from it... It was fun to throw it back. Anyways, it doesn't even hurt anymore," He lied, putting a tentative hand to it. The other parts were true, but... He couldn't lie to himself and say it didn't. Not only did the cut sting like hell, the actual area ached. He was actually a little surprised he didn't have to get stitches, as it was much deeper than it looked. But despite these thoughts playing with his head, he pretended it was painless for Alfred, not wanting to stress him out
anymore than he already was. He knew Alfred cried more than he did when it happened, and thinking back on it made his heart break. So he smiled and poked at it, trying his hardest not to wince as he felt pain shoot through his face, honestly wanting to grimace. Praying it didn't open and start bleeding all over again, he stopped, still smiling toothily. After a moment of staring that Kiku feared wouldn't cease, Alfred let loose and started laughing, patting Kiku on the back, who sighed contentedly.

"Pops! Kiku got a perfect score on all of his exams... Geez, I don't know how he does it," He said, rubbing the back of his neck.

Francis insisted that since it was the last day of exams, Kiku should stay over, and he would take them somewhere. If they wanted to, of course. Francis put his fork down, patting Kiku on the back, flashing a handsome grin. "Really? That's impressive, Kiku. Do you want anything? Let me buy you something," He said, immediately getting up. Kiku shook his hands frantically, nervously laughing in the process.

"Um, haha, thank you, but please, don't buy me anything, I-

"He wants a Big Brother record, but his dad doesn't like Janis Joplin, so he won't buy it," Alfred said immediately, laughing with grimace as he felt his foot being crushed by Kiku's, trying not to giggle at his pointed look.

Francis looked over at Kiku, wiggling his eyebrows in what could have been surprise.
"Big Brother And The Holding Company? Hm... Kiku, I wouldn't have guessed," He said with a light laugh, looking him up and down. Looking over at his wallet, he reached over to it, wanting to buy it nonetheless.

Francis admired Kiku; he was a polite boy, who seemed to be able to tame his son, but had some sort of... Spunk.
"Janis Joplin... She's going to be preforming at the Woodstock Festival, Kiku," Francis said, rubbing his chin, slightly playing with his beard. Wasn't Kiku from New York?

Francis smiled as he heard a sharp inhale from Kiku.
"...If only I lived in New York, still..." He mumbled, shaking his head slowly, knitting his eyebrows slightly. Or... If Alfred lived there, too. Even then, he knew his father would never let him go. But he knew Francis probably would...

Alfred nudged his side, raising his eyebrows in mock surprise.
"Hey, hey, hey. At least now, you can finally get your Cheap Thrills record..." He pointed out, pulling his plate of lunch in front of him. This time, Alfred had made sure it was not rare for Kiku. "We should listen to it later."

"Alfred...?"

Alfred woke up, alert, being the light sleeper he was. What time was it? What was that noise that made it's way into Alfred's dreams? The uneasy sound had been enough to pull him out of a dreamless night, and he put his glasses on, squinting through the darkness. Yawning all the way to the light switch, he fumbled for it, reading on the clock which hung on a lonely fashion on the wall. Twelve thirteen?
With a pleasant surprised sensation in his heart, he realized he had been sixteen for thirteen minutes,
and gave that smile he knew Kiku loved. "Happy birthday..." He whispered excitedly, looking down to look at his own hands. Distracted by the noise of the clock and his own heart, he had momentarily forgotten the noise near the window.

"...Alfred!"
He turned away briskly, directing his attention to his wall. Or rather... His window?
Squinting his eyes in an almost surreal disbelief, he rubbed his blue eyes, gasping in pleasure at the sight before him.
Outside his window, he saw Kiku waving over, a somewhat irritated expression on his soft face. He opened the window in a rushed manner, trying his best not to let his laughter ring out; it was late, after all.

Opening the window, he was met with a kiss on the cheek, fleeting, though special nevertheless. "Happy Birthday..." Kiku breathed, tucking a part of Alfred's hair behind his ear.
"W-Why are you here...?" He laughed. He knew it to be an odd question; Kiku always said to never question the gifts one received, and so he did.
But Kiku only laughed. Shaking his head, he looked as if the answer was one out in the open, one Alfred should see.
"...What do you think I'm here for? Come down here," He instructed, holding his welcoming hands out to Alfred, who took them without question. By now, he knew better than to question it. Alfred jumped a bit as he felt Kiku grab his hand, feeling it steadier than it had ever been.
"Come on, close your eyes. Alfred F. Jones, now, you are going to follow me."
Running close behind Kiku, hands clasped together, he tired his best to to ignore the impulse to open his eyes. Though he didn't need to, for he already felt where they were going.
Smiling exhilaration, he let the laugh he had been bottling up flow from his lips, filling Kiku's ears. Smiling, Kiku dragged him along into the night.

Alfred opened his eyes to the expected sight. Yes, it was predictable. But it wasn't any less special than the night they had been before, or the nights he had dreamt about it.
He inhaled, taking the aroma of strawberries in. Opening his eyes, he made them smile, seeing the familiar sight of the lake.

Laying next to Kiku, he ran his thumb over the hand he hadn't let go of all night. Smiling at the way they fit perfectly together, he rested his head on Kiku's shoulder, feeling him breath slowly. It was almost as if he had fallen asleep. Even if he had, Alfred would spend all night with him in the field, not being able to look at him enough.

Kiku sat up, slightly taking Alfred off guard. Taking in the way the moon reflected off of his porcelain skin, the way his hair framed his face, the way his eyes glittered. Looking down at Alfred, he leaned down and kissed him softly, closing his eyes in what could've been peace, in possible tiredness.

Pulling away, Alfred felt something drip on his face; and opening his shut eyes, he was met with Kiku shedding quiet tears, a smile still resting on his lips.
Reaching up, Alfred wiped them away with a strong hand, slightly startled when he found them to be a steady flow.
"Ha... Happy Birthday, A-Alfred..." He faltered. He put his hand to his lip, almost to stifle the sound that had not yet escaped his lips.
Trying out the words he had only said once before, he smiled, his tears never ceasing. "I-I love you," He said, practically sighing the words. He didn't know the source of his tears- he was happy, yes. He was the happiest he had ever been in his life. Or sadness; something about the tears seemed sad, but the source was an unspoken knowledge between them.
With Kiku's dad's mentality, through public's eyes, they would never be accepted.

Finally releasing his hand, Alfred opened his arms for Kiku. Laying down in them, he held Kiku as his shoulders shook. But Kiku found his hand, resting them over Alfred's chest, not intending on ever letting it go. Laughing lightheartedly, betraying the tears in his eyes, he brought Kiku's face to his, returning the kiss Kiku gave.

"I love you too! More than I could ever hope to say...!"

Both laughing, both crying, they kept each other happy throughout the night, burying their head's in the others' chest.

*Now we're there and we've only just begun*
*This will be our year*
*took a long time to come*

Looking up at the stars in the sky, feeling the summer air, they laid hand in hand, Alfred still in his pajamas.
Resting his head on Alfred's shoulder, he closed his eyes, letting his thoughts and his boy coax a long awaited smile unto his face.
*It has taken a long time to come.)*
*This is our year.*

Chapter End Notes

(Video: To Love Somebody- The Bee Gees, 1967)
Ahaha, do you see how different they are just from their taste in music? Kiku is The Beatles and The Doors, and Alfred is The Beach Boys and Elvis.
Alright, well, that's a wrap! But, knowing me, I've already got an epilogue, but, you know, only if my dearest readers want it. :^)
But yeah, you know, since they're young, they probably fought a couple of times. But you know, that's really healthy to fight. Just, when I write this, and Suspicious Minds by Elvis comes on, it makes me cry a little!

This whole stupid fanfiction has made me rather... Emotional. But anyways, it's been one hell of a ride, and I loved every minute of it, oh boy. This has included me bolting out of bed at four and five am to add and edit things, so it's a lot to me. Anyways, enjoy, and I hope you love it as much as I do, ahaha.

Listen, even if this was written in the span of a week and five days, and more than half of those days were days of not writing and thinking, I've grown overly attached. And I almost don't want it to end, and I really can't believe it's over. Just publishing it makes me feel some sort of strange regret. Or nostalgia, only after two minutes.
But, enjoy!
"Well, Kiku, I'm off!"
Yao kissed his son's forehead, slightly smoothing out his hair.
"Don't make too much of a mess while I'm gone... And..." He looked from his watch to his son, resting his hand on his shoulder.
"Be careful around him."
Kiku rolled his eyes, nodding slovenly to his father. He knew he was indicating Francis, who had tried fruitlessly flirting with Yao the past year, buying things for Kiku's seventeenth birthday. Although Alfred's had just passed, it only felt like yesterday they had met. Kiku had mentioned Yao's mentality on the subject to Francis more than once before, but in spite of himself, Francis seemed to do it subconsciously. It seemed nights with other men had rubbed off on him, resulting in clouded views of the perception of the public. Francis hardly seemed to care, but uauslly tried to keep it to a minimum.

Kiku knew Francis was not a pedophile, as Yao seemed to be indicating at the moment, but only bisexual. Nevertheless, he nodded in spite of himself, knowing his father only wanted what was best from him. That, and he was waiting to be rid of him and have the week to himself and Alfred.

Yao's New York accent never seemed to disappear as Kiku's mysteriously did at times. Kiku listened to it as Yao walked almost frantically around making sure everything was in order before he left his most prized possession and his house.

"Okay. What do you do if someone knocks on the door?"
Kiku sighed, almost as if the more annoyed he seemed, the more Yao would catch on that he wasn't ten years old. But knowing he couldn't get through to his father, he practically sighed his answer.
"Don't answer the door for anyone. If there's an emergency, call 911 and then you. No staying out after eight," He recited, in a dull learnt-by-heart tone. Kiku expected Yao to throw him a look, but instead walked over to him, and placed his hands on Kiku's cheeks, making him seem like a little boy.

Kiku tried not to roll his eyes as Yao gave a nervous laugh. "Really, be careful, okay? I'll miss you a lot," He said, hugging his son. Kiku nodded in response, reluctantly feeling relief spread through his body as he smelt his father's coat. The same as always, he thought, a small smile coaxed onto his face.

"... Yeah, I'll miss you too. I love you," Kiku said, tucking some hair behind his ear. Kiku didn't know why Yao had to get so emotional about this. Yes, it was his first business trip away from his son, after all. But he was going to New York, so shouldn't he have a little fun there while it lasted?

Yao opened the door, taking his stuff with him. He waved in what would be seen to an outsider as over exaggeration, and made a kissing sound. "I love you too! Be safe. Remember, the list of numbers to call is in the kitchen!" And with that, he closed the door, eyes probably watering slightly at the thought of leaving his only son for a week, falsely believing he'd be alone all week.

Kiku smiled as he opened the windows, and moved straight to the phone. Entering Alfred's number into his painfully slow rotary phone, he imagined putting his fingers inside, making it go faster, but instead stood rigid in forced patience as he waited for his favourite person to answer.

When he did, Kiku breathed in relief, thinking for a moment he wouldn't answer.
"Do you still want to come over today? My dad just left," he said, laughing slightly. He knew he shouldn't exactly be happy about his father leaving him, but he knew Alfred would fill in the space of the vacant house. Not only that, he could visit Mathieu and Francis and Alfred. Kiku thought those exact words in his head, and slowly repeated it. Francis, Mathieu, and... He paused a minute before thinking it. Alfred. He allowed himself a small smile at the thought, the two syllable word. Alfred. What a cute name. Alfred.

"Totally. Just let me double check with my dad," he answered, and Kiku heard him lower the phone, probably onto his toned chest. "Pops! Can I still go to Kiku's place for tonight?" he shouted, muffling the phone into his shirt. Kiku heard him shout back, making his accent thicker. Alfred made a few confused words in response, putting the phone back to his ear. "Uh, I'm pretty sure he said yes... But I have no idea what he said after that."

Smiling, Kiku ran to his room, playing the Cheap Thrills record Francis had bought him. Asking him over was the easy part - waiting was the worst.

Welcoming Alfred in, he was happy to see he brought a change of clothes, as he sometimes forgot to do. It usually resulted in Alfred trying to fit into one of the biggest shirts Kiku owned. Playing around, watching TV, and mindlessly eating is what they did for most of the day.

Finally, they somehow ended up in Yao's room, laying on his comfy bed. It was a nice place for Kiku to stay, because when he was sick, he usually tended to sleep in there. Striking up conversation, Kiku stood on the bed, looking down at Alfred, who reluctantly laid on Yao's bed.

"So, how's your dad?" he asked, bouncing on the bed a bit. Had the mattress always been so bouncy? Kiku preferred hard beds. Alfred shrugged, taking off his glasses, standing with Kiku. "The same as always, I guess. You know, he's actually going to see our teacher for some reason," Alfred said, knitting his eyebrows together.

"Oh, seriously? Which one? What'd you do this time?" Kiku laughed, elbowing him roughly.

"Hm? Oh, our English teacher, Mr. Kirkland. You know, I can't really tell what I've done wrong." Kiku let out a laugh. "I thought your dad hated Mr. Kirkland! You must've done something real bad then," he chuckled, taking Alfred's hands. Jumping on the bed with Alfred a little, he remembered he did not turn off his record player, but decided he did not care. Laughing at Alfred's hesitance, he moved some hair out of his face.

"I- Is this really okay?" Alfred asked, a nervous smile on his face. Kiku merely waved it off, trying to have fun with him.

"Sure! He isn't here to see it!"

Out of breath, they jumped a little more, chests nearly hurting out of laughter and the exertion of jumping for so long. When had jumping on beds ever been so fun? It was usually done at sleepovers in elementary school, seen more as an act of defiance and coolness rather than for the actual fun. But now, Alfred and Kiku weren't thinking of the people they would be 'defying', or the bed they could possibly break. But even as Kiku saw the blush from laughing on Alfred's face, and the clear look in his eyes, he couldn't help but reach over and kiss him. Their sweaters long forgotten on the floor, they made no effort to retrieve them, as the sweat and heat from jumping around had made them
uncomfortable with the restraints. Pulling away, Kiku couldn't help but sit him down on the bed and kiss him some more.

Pulling away to look at Alfred's surprised at being engaged in such a passionate kiss, Kiku had seen Alfred's blush hadn't left, and if possible, had gotten redder. Eyeing it with lust, he wondered just how far down it went.

Breathless from the jumping and the kissing, Kiku spoke in a breathless voice. "Y-You're so handsome," He said, looking at Alfred sitting beneath him, registering he was sitting on Alfred's lap, legs on either side of him.

Alfred smiled in an almost shy way, desperately trying to think of a response. Seeing the smiley, flustered look on his face only made Kiku burn for him more. "Uh, thank you, yo-"

Kiku cut him off, pulling him in for another kiss, using more tongue in it than Kiku thought he ever had. Having enough of sitting up, he pushed Alfred down flat on his back, moving off of him.

But feeling Alfred kiss back with the same enthusiasm, and eventually moving from his mouth to his jaw, to rest on his neck, Kiku found himself wishing Alfred would leave marks all over it, more than he ever had. Sitting back on top of Alfred, he began to repay the favour. But he let Alfred kiss him a little more, and feeling Alfred playfully bite his ear, he didn't know whether to gasp or laugh.

At this, he felt blood rush thorough his stomach all the way down to his penis. Feeling his cock twitch in the best kind of tantalizing pleasure, he rubbed slightly against Alfred's muscular chest as he deepened the kiss, most likely subconsciously, more to feel Alfred and less to let Alfred feel him.

Kissing him deeper and deeper, he positioned himself fully between Alfred's legs. Smiling - smirking into the kiss, he knew he would've liked to kiss him up against a wall, or against a counter, so he could just feel and bask in the victory of making Alfred weak in the knees.

Pulling away, half to tease, half to progress, he worked away from his mouth, greedily taking anything from Alfred as he could. Hearing the breath Alfred took after being released was refreshing, but hearing it quicken at Kiku's warm tongue was everything. He let himself explore the expanse of Alfred's sun spotted skin from surfing, sucking at the areas, hoping to leave more than one mark.

Yes, Kiku and Alfred had left hickies on each other many times before, but... Kiku wanted to go all the way now, and he was sure Alfred did as well, feeling him slowly open his legs wider for Kiku. Biting down at it, he took his time with his jaw. Kissing lower, he brought his tongue down and teeth ever so slightly, already at the area of where the collarbone meets the neck. Hearing Alfred's breath hitched in his throat and the next sharp intake of breath, he knew he had found the right spot. He decided he would linger on it for a little.

Taking in the taste and quality of Alfred's skin, to feel his breath quicken and slow to feel his chest rise and fall, he knew he wanted to throw him out of whack.

Reaching down with nimble fingers, he snaked his arm down to thigh, and without another moment of thought, he gave it a sweet squeeze, feeling the muscle. Slowly stroking it with needy yet teasing hands, he made his way to his inner thigh, rubbing his hand in circles. Hearing Alfred gasp, he smirked a bit, and aimed higher, feeling his leg muscle tense up. He swore he could feel his cock twitch under the strain.

Stopping for a moment, he sat up completely, straddling Alfred and already feeling tight and a pulse starting to come on. But doing his best to ignore it for a moment, he looked down at Alfred and laughed at himself a little, finding the almost aching hardness somehow funny. Bending down to kiss him again, he adjusted his position, poking Alfred a bit. They couldn't help but laugh at such a thing.
He felt Alfred's pants tighten with the reminder of the useless things, he almost scoffed; he was restraining himself from ripping them off with his teeth. Subconsciously, he began to kiss faster, sloppier, not getting enough of touching him. At this point, massaging Alfred's thigh was muscle memory now, and as he inched higher and higher, he let his swift hand brush Alfred, feeling the warm area.

Hearing Alfred let out a broken whimper mingled with a gasp, he let go of his leg, this time bringing it upwards. Starting to unbutton Alfred's shirt, he tried his best not to attack his chest immediately. Giving the areas hot, slack kisses. He couldn't get enough of him; He felt as if there wasn't enough time, as if there would never be enough time to feel Alfred. Of course, he knew there would be years to do a lot more of this, but he couldn't help feeling rushed and excited for his long delayed- or long waited exploration of Alfred's body, and for the other to do the same. He longed for that titillating gaze Alfred sometimes fixed him under to perforate him right where he lay. But seeing Alfred's eyes shut in the moment, he decided he wanted to force those eyes opened.

Still working his way down, he hummed slightly as he reached Alfred's lower stomach, and decided to stop all together. Getting up off Alfred, he left him quite cold, and with slight disappointment, Alfred thought that's all they would do. But as he got up slightly, Kiku gently pushed him back down, knee digging into Alfred's groin.

"Alfred F. Jones. Take off your pants," He ordered, trying not to smile. Removing his own pair of pants and his turtle neck, he allowed himself to chuckle slightly. Honestly, he tried to be calm and cool, but in all honesty, the current situation made him want to do nothing more than smile fervently.

Going slower in some cruel way of teasing, he thought for pleasurable things to do, knowing he couldn't do everything he wanted at the same time. His fingers skirted the band of Alfred's boxers, teasing even after a long year. He palmed Alfred, feeling the stickiness that stained boxers his dark blue. Feeling his cock inevitably harden under Kiku's touch, he stroked it a bit more, keeping each one gentle, not wanting to end it too early.

After a year of testing and teasing, a year of getting too passionate in the school bathrooms at lunch or during class, at Kiku's house, it was a year of holding back. A year of simply feeling the other, not able to do anything else, causing desperate day dreams and night dreams that left one feeling hopeless, and utterly frustrated. And Kiku was not about to do that again. Spreading Alfred's legs a bit wider with hands shaking with lust, he rested his chin on Alfred's groin momentarily, cheek brushing Alfred's erect penis. Looking at those lovely inner thighs of his, he knew he wanted to leave marks all over them, and took the liberty to start giving them kisses.

At this, Alfred rested his hands upon Kiku's head, surprisingly gentle, considering the amount of strain Kiku was placing him under. Alfred didn't see why he should tease now - he was ready for Kiku, and perhaps, he thought, he was being impatient. It almost made Alfred think Kiku was being hesitant and almost stopped to let Kiku think, but as he felt Kiku grab his length, those thoughts of doubt left as quickly as they came.

Just being the insufferable tease he was, he gave Alfred what could have been seen as a kiss, but what was really more of a bite through Alfred's boxers. He instinctively wrapped his right leg around Kiku as he let out a broken sound, opening his eyes to be met with the ceiling.

Alfred swallowed thickly. "K-Kiku, stop teasing me...!"

Laughing a bit at himself, Kiku decided Alfred was right, and in a flurry, he removed Alfred's boxers from him. Staring down at it, it was roughly the same size as it usually felt - but now, he could finally see the fleshy blush that occasionally entered his dreams, flooding the waking hours. In Kiku's eyes,
the realism of it was as refreshing as it was pleasing. It was much different than dreaming such a thing. Now, Alfred lay in all his beauty, if Kiku would call it that, in nothing but that unbuttoned white shirt that happened to be Alfred's favourite, looking utterly picturesque. The image from between Alfred's legs was so up close and personal, yet so brilliant that it seemed like something out of a magazine, kept under the beds of both boys and girls alike.

It was so surreal, that for a fleeting instant, Kiku was sure he was in a dream - but to feel his own hardness pressing uncomfortably against his boxers, tight and aching, and to feel Alfred's pulse in his hands was proof enough that it was all in the waking.

Seeing his bare penis reminded him of his first time feeling Alfred's length. A heated session of kissing in a conveniently desolate school bathroom, and caught in the moment, Kiku brought his hand from Alfred's thigh (he seemed to have a thing for Alfred's thighs) and took Alfred into his hand, running his hand along it. Yes, it did look as big as it felt, as big as it was in dreams and daydreams.

Taking his time, he gave kisses from the base to the head, aware of what a beautiful thing he got to pursue really was. Licking Alfred to get his attention, he spoke, a low raspy sound that often made Alfred pay attention any time of the day.

"Alfred."

Hearing Kiku speak his name in such a moment only served to make him weaker. Looking down at Kiku, Alfred decided he much rather preferred the sight of Kiku above him.

"I want you to look at me while I do this."

Kiku gave him a look at he took Alfred into his mouth, almost as if saying, "eyes on me." Hands still working on Alfred, he tried to ensure the most pleasurable experience for the both of them. From what could've been lack of experience or from what Kiku just liked, Alfred felt teeth being used, and from what was possibly giddy happiness or from his sense of humor, he laughed, eyes still on Kiku. It was possibly from the odd expression Kiku was wearing, eyes subconsciously wide open, showing the laughable intensity of focus that made Kiku look rather gaunt.

The laugh was cut short by a moan Alfred didn't know he was holding back, and covered his mouth. Alfred could no longer control his breath or voice as Kiku went faster and worked him harder, slightly humming against Alfred.

Feeling Alfred against his tongue and mouth made Kiku restrain from touching himself, knowing full well Alfred would repay the favour. Feeling himself hopelessly moan against Alfred, he knew Alfred's time was short. With another moment, Kiku felt Alfred release into his mouth. To accompany the hot saltiness that held somehow a sickeningly sweet sense to it, the sickeningly sweet noise of Alfred crumpling came to his ears. Swallowing, he raised himself up, kissing Alfred fully, sharing the salty taste with him. He pulled away after a moment, each of them sharing a triumphant smile, as if saying, "We did it!"

Kiku, laying on his back, spread his legs open for Alfred, the weight still there never leaving. His voice was quick and breathy as he spoke.

"Touch me, use everything."

Even in the few hours that followed, the giddy charge of happiness that had refused to leave clung to them. It clung to their laughs, their smiles, their breaths. Even the desire to do such an act again overtook them, and within the next hour, the could no longer ignore it, as if they really wanted to.
He spread his legs wide open, admiring Alfred looking down and studying him. "Let's do it again."

Knowing the sheets would inexorably need changing, Kiku and Alfred laid together naked under the comforter, breaths softly mingling. The sun had long since taken its leave, allowing the moon to shed light upon the city.

They couldn't stop thanking each other; it was as if they had to constantly remind each other how thankful they were to have come across each other, regarding sex or not. Kiku seemed particularly keen on this subject, damn near objecting every time Alfred readily accepted his thanks.

"No, really, thank you... For everything.. For not only being my everything, for being my first everything... First partner, first love, first kiss, first fuck..."
It was eventful. They wouldn't forget the entertaining events that made them as nervous as it did excited, like screaming that could've woken the neighbors, ripped out curtains, and a permanently creaky bed. However, whether the screaming was out of fun or pleasure cannot be said for sure.

But even as they held each other in a peaceful silence, it held a stagnant, almost dormant quality to it that left them feeling a desperate kind of hopelessness that had begun to plague them. It was unspoken and scary to say aloud; they were seventeen now, Kiku nearing eighteen. The unavailing war was now well into its fifteenth year; the idle feeling Kiku and Alfred had felt by it had been replaced with a feeling of dread. The fear of getting drafted had become more real than any feeling they had had unfold within their time. A year ago, they had overcome the only real obstacle that it held for them at the time; the division between their opposing races. They expected the fighting to be over at this point - but it still trudged through the years, having already eaten up nearly two decades. The only thing the either of them could hope was that when Mathieu's time came to turn eighteen came, he would not be drafted.

The reunion between Kiku and Yao was a happy one on Yao's behalf, a nervous one on Kiku's. Even as Yao gave his thanks, Kiku couldn't help but stiffen at Yao's remarks. "Wow Kiku, you took it to heart to clean, you even cleaned my room! Thank you!" His lackluster, almost weak words of welcome went unnoticed by Yao, who was only happy to see his son.

April 1975

His twenty second birthday having passed, the only thing left to wait for was Alfred's twenty second birthday. The use of alcohol on the day would have to be closely monitored, never used wisely on either of their behalves. Where would they go? The beach, like last year? A restaurant? Kiku could care less where they went, but he knew it would be a big deal to Francis, and even Yao.

With the war over, the idleness that had overtook them with each passing day subsided to nothing, and with Kiku and Alfred both busy in college, they hardly had time to worry. Four years down, about four more to go. Aiming for the highest had never been an easy thing to do, but Kiku, determined to be the best radiologist there was, only strived for perfection. But working alongside Alfred and helping him achieve a master's in biochemistry had been a little easier, having someone to complain and relate with. But since Kiku was going that extra mile, he was a bit grumpier than Alfred. They were both off to bigger and better things.

Shopping for Alfred was hard - he could never give a straight answer. He never wanted anything but
food, so usually he was just taken out and that was that, but... This year was different. The war had finally ended this month, and he wanted to commemorate such a special memory with a nice gift for his lover. He always said, "whatever you think I'd want," or "it doesn't matter to me," but in all honesty, it really, really mattered to Kiku. He knew Alfred would be happy with anything he gave him, even if it was just a dirty container from one of those cakes Kiku hated, but he wanted something special this year. A year to remember; July, 1975, his boyfriend's twenty second birthday. Something they could someday show off in the future, perhaps with awe at it surviving so long, perhaps with a sigh, something along the lines of, "Ah, 1975. What a year!"

June 2015

Kiku usually had to double take whenever he looked down at his own hands.

Hands. His hands were still petite and fair skinned, but damn, with each passing year it seemed they only seemed to shrivel. Hands as aged and wrinkled as his certainly couldn't belong to... Well, him.

He remembered how smooth they used to be. How strong they used to be. Yes, at sixty three, his hands were still fairly strong, but only when they needed to be. Were they still nice to hold? He knew Alfred still liked to hold his hand. Even at sixty two, Alfred was jumping around - yes, his hair was white now, his eyes now crinkled at the edges, but he was still strong, and was still in good health. As was Kiku; they aged nicely, if Kiku would call it that. Alfred first started going gray at the ripe age of thirty, as ridiculous as it sounded. Kiku, even now, had salt and pepper hair, much to his displeasure. Yes, he knew that everyone aged, but why did it have to come so rapidly for him? He was no longer the nimble boy who snuck to Alfred's bedside window at night.

Yao lived a long, happy life, but ended up losing it in the nineties at the age of seventy nine, a shockingly early age for someone like Yao. And yet, Francis was ready to drop dead any moment now, still walking around in Alfred's childhood house, having never moved out. Having children at twenty four and not at thirty six like Yao did that to a person, relatively speaking.

But even now, at age sixty three, Kiku had not married Alfred.

They couldn't have in the past - Kiku's fear of what his father would think of him held him back many for many years. Seeing Alfred and Kiku live together the moment they became eighteen had set it's suspicions to not only Yao, but to the public. Yes, roommates. That's all they were. Best friends. Best friends who never seemed to marry, or even to date nice women, nonetheless. Women pointed out by Yao were brushed off with a busy hand, and usually a stern, "Getting my career is more important to me than marriage - and besides, I have you!" And he spoke nothing but the truth, but nonetheless hid a much bigger lie, one Yao had figured out years before his death, but one nobody knew he had long since accepted.

Out on a morning walk, as all old men do, he realized just how much he missed working - if it were up to him, he'd be working this very moment, but due to back problems and a caring partner, he had been retired for two years. Yes, it was fun to have the whole day to yourself once and a while, or a vacation off, but to know you would be doing nothing the rest of your life was painfully dull and was easily the worst thing about getting old. Yes, tending to a garden was refreshing and time consuming, but that perpetual itch in his aged legs was just shouting at him to work, to do something with the last few decades of his life.

They had constant trips to the beach, even if Alfred didn't surf anymore. This trips had made Alfred
want to move to Huntington in their mid thirties. But after Kiku had told him they still haven't moved from Cypress since they first met, he instantly dropped the idea, not thinking much more of it after.

He had always wanted to marry Alfred, and knew that in California, they could, but... Something always held them back, something always held Kiku back. There was always something - but he knew that if they had stuck together for this many years, they were bound to die together, and that no ring or papers could ever change that. Yes, others had known of their relationship. Friends and coworkers, Francis and Mathieu, random people on the streets who often stopped to talk to them. But still, something had kept them from going along with it.

Pulling out his flip phone after feeling it buzz, he answered it, seeing it was Alfred.

He sighed a bit, stopping in the middle of the sidewalk and moving out of the way for others. "He-"

"Have you seen the news?" He asked excitedly, sounding the same as he did years and years ago. He sounded as if he had just shut the TV off, and was now about to leave the house.

"Uh, no, I haven't. Why?"

Ignoring him, Alfred continued to talk. "Just come home now. Actually, what street are you on? I'll pick you up," He asked casually. Kiku could just imagine him moving restlessly across the house as he did sometimes, ill at ease and unsure of what to do at his old age.

Kiku knitted his eyebrows in confusion. "It's okay, I can walk home myself."

Without another word, he closed the phone shut, too lost in his thoughts give a proper goodbye. He hoped that whatever he was excited about was good.

Stepping through the door, he was greeted by Alfred, who kissed his cheek with more enthusiasm than normal. He looked over at him with narrowed eyes, making no move to kiss him back yet.

"Alfred F. Jones, just what are you up to?" He asked, giving in and offering a small kiss on the cheek, hardly registering the lighter atmosphere, being a bit oblivious, as he always was.

"Well, I was watching the news this morning," Alfred started, sitting on the couch, looking fit to tell a story.

"As you do every morning."

"Yeah, but you left earlier, so you couldn't see it with me. Well, today's was different," He said, taking Kiku's hands.

Kiku gave a smile, almost as if he were about to start laughing. "The news is different everyday," He said, sitting next to Alfred, leaning his head on his shoulder. But Alfred looked down at him, reaching over to put his hand on Kiku's shoulder.

"No! Listen. The law's just been passed, gay marriage became legal. Everywhere in the country!"

Kiku sat up, and for a moment, he thought Alfred was joking, or getting his hopes up. But the way his glasses were askew and his blue eyes bright as ever, he knew it had to be the truth. He almost wanted to start asking questions, such as, "What, when?" He was so taken aback he had nearly...
forgotten Alfred kept saying "This morning, this morning!"

At a complete loss for words, he took both of Alfred's hands, trying to make sense of this thoughts. "Wh- That's wonderful, Fred! Le- Let's get married!"

His eyes widened in shock of what he had just proposed. An ludicrously long delayed proposal just escaped his lips, and in spite of himself, he almost wanted to put a hand to his mouth, to shake his head at his own foolishness. But for what? What was so foolish about marriage? The only real foolish part, Kiku knew, was the delay and they fear they both knew they shouldn't have felt. So why not? He was sixty three, not twenty. This was something the both of them could handle.

His expression changed to one of acceptance, losing the one of shock that caused his wrinkles to deepen. Despite this, he aged quite well. But when Alfred smiled, he found that the wrinkles on Alfred almost complimented his face, and the bright smile that broke on his face now made Kiku almost stare. He looked just as he did forty seven years ago, asking Kiku to be his friend. Did Alfred still think the same way about him?

Friends and coworkers were notified over the next few days, and most of them were as surprised as they were pleased. One friend that used to work with Kiku before he took to a retired life, Monika, was happy to hear it - she went over to visit them both frequently. She was a nice, serious girl - a bit scary looking, but hardworking and caring. Her boyfriend occasionally came over, too. He especially got along with Alfred. Seeing the state of their house was always entertaining, something all young people liked to do at the houses of the old. Seeing old pictures hung up with stories, or in the wallets of the other, pots of flowers to take care of, the occasional record. Perhaps the photo booth pictures were the best ones, or their graduation picture, where if you looked hard enough, could see that the two were, in fact, holding hands behind their robes.

He often liked seeing old pictures of them young, that occasionally had a story to it, or a heartfelt remark, ones that were usually along the lines of, "He was the cutest boy in the whole school," or "The day this was taken was one of the best". They were common things to hear, yes, but sweet nonetheless.

But this time over, Monika and her sweet partner wished to hear something else, a story they surprisingly haven't heard before. It was a fleeting thing, the feelings, the expressions, the little touches they gave while telling them. Kiku smiled as he heard the request he expected.

"Can you tell us about when you two first met?"

Kiku smiled as he nudged Alfred's hand with his, a reminiscent spark in his eyes elders usually possessed.

"Ah, 1969. What a summer."

Even as Kiku retold it, even as he and Alfred laughed at the best parts, Kiku knew Monika and the boy could never understand, not until they were old, or shared certain things Kiku and Alfred shared. Things such as waking up to the other's face smiling in sleep, or things such as crying for one another - they needed to experience those for themselves.

Those long kept memories, never ceasing smiles, those timeless feelings burrowed deeply into Kiku's heart that only Alfred could cause that would die with him. As he felt his heart race at the sound of Alfred's laugh and the touch of his hand, even forty seven years later, he smiled at them. These young people? he thought, holding Alfred's hand.
They haven't got a clue.

END

Haha, you can probably tell, but this is my first time writing like, smut smut. In detail. But I read it a lot, and read a lot prior to this, so I hope it isn't too shabby. But, I know some of you will probably be disappointed. Because their first time was not what I'd like to call making love, but rather fucking. And yeah, that's gonna be disappointing to some people. But for them to be seventeen, their first time would not exactly be that purely of love, not in my eyes. And we need to take into consideration the time this takes place in.

And especially since they restrain themselves so much in public and even in their own homes(well, okay, Kiku's home) really helps this fact. And I think it's more realistic. So... Kinda sorry to ya. Not really. But of course, the time of making love will come, probably sooner than anyone actually expects.

And oh geez, Kiku, the guy with the PhD in radiology and Alfred, the guy with a Masters in Biochemistry? Total power couple. And I actually only found this out today, but microwaves didn't actually come out until 1967, but they weren't really common until the early 1980's. Haha, oops. But apparently only rich people had them, so Kiku totally had one, haha. But anyways, if you didn't know, Monika is nyo Germany and her boyfriend is Feliciano. I just felt like putting her in, haha I don't know. I can't help but headcanon Kiku and Alfred attending those gay pride marches they did in the seventies, but you know, they're probably too old to do so now.

This was actually shorter than I intended on making it... Well, anyways, have fun reading, sorry it took so long!

End Notes

Haha, I got the idea of this from a line in a song. But anyways, this is only gonna be like, four chapters.

Also, if you were wondering(I know you weren't, bu) I can't upload a picture in this section like you can on wattpad, but if you aren't lazy enough, look up 'George Harrison 1966' and boom, you got Kiku's hair. He probably dressed the same way, too.

(Video: Do You Want To Know A Secret- The Beatles, 1963)

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