Into the Grey

by Kratos_Aurion (Velvet_Crowe)

Summary

Light is a young, hot, reclusive Omega who follows all the rules and does it all right. Except when he's sneaking out to capture criminals as the vigilante only known as Kira. L will always and forever be the world's greatest detective, but the Alpha might have a little competition in the Kanto region of Japan.

In a world just barely free of Omega oppression, these two geniuses find themselves in a race against the clock and each other.

Notes

I own nothing!

This is my first post to this fandom, and I would like to blame AnimeFanime for tricking me into falling in love with the Death Note Omegaverse. If you haven't read AF's works, go read 'em.

See the end of the work for more notes.
Two decades ago, the Omega Rights Movement demanded an overhaul of Omega treatment and protection in the state of Japan. Similar movements were happening across the world. The trafficking of young, virgin Omegas had become common, though hushed, knowledge. It was not unusual for Omegas, both unbonded and bonded, to be taken off the street and sold into prostitution. When a child presented Omega, usually around the age of fifteen, it was standard practice for them to be moved to a homeschooled environment, simply to prevent fights between adolescent Alphas over them in school. An Omega college graduate was a rare spectacle. The percentage of Omegas unmated by age twenty was less than 7%.

In answer to the growing pressure, both internationally and internally, the Japanese government organized a civil reconstruction of public Dynamic interactions. The police were dispatched in force to break up the trafficking rings and prostitution houses. New curriculums were implemented for Dynamic education and training. And dozens of new security measures were instituted to ensure Omega safety and equality. While the laws were numerous, three main changes became writ in an Omega’s life.

- No unbonded Omega could be found in public space without the supervision of a state-licensed Beta chaperone.
- All adult, unmated Omegas would spend their heat in a certified stayhouse.
- Unmated, presented Omegas of any age registered with a matching agency and interviewed prospective Alpha mates weekly.

For the majority of Omegas worldwide, these changes and restrictions led to a great improvement in available opportunities and life choices. Of course, those activities which had once been common practice, simply moved back into the shadows. Omega disappearances decreased from daily to monthly. Most people forgot that Omegas were once considered only breeding stock for the taking. Most new generation Omegas never even worried about being kidnapped off the street. And most never begrudged the security measures instituted for their safety.

Light Yagami was not one of those Omegas.

Light sipped his coffee, carefully tilting the newspaper to get a better look at the small follow-up piece tucked in at the bottom. No new developments.

He’d already known the NPA had hit a roadblock from his father’s case files. But there was always a chance the press would find some hot new tip. Or just make one up. Their creative
interpretation of stories had proved surprisingly useful on several occasions over the last few years; they told Light what was unimportant, by virtue of accurate reporting, and what was being hushed up, by what was omitted or altered.

Light folded the paper and downed the rest of his coffee in a single gulp. He rose to leave the little café, his current favorite, and headed towards his ‘office’.

Technically, he worked from home, only calling his Beta nanny, Kite, two or three times a week. Since his formal address was one of the more tricked out Omega apartment complexes around Tokyo, Kite didn’t find it so odd that Light rarely went out. Usually their trips involved shopping, visits to Light’s family, the occasional restaurant, and, of course, mating interviews. Kite was blissfully content with his easy charge, never thinking that Light had a fun little secret passage exit from the basement. (Technically a forgotten, abandoned air-raid shelter the complex had run into when it bulldozed its way in and the entire reason Light had rented the apartment in the first place.)

Light may have found it a little too European-castle clichéd, but it worked.

He navigated the lunch-busy streets, drawing more than a few eyes with his lithe, graceful form. But since he didn’t smell like an Omega, the eyes quickly slid away from him. He grinned; those Omega pheromone inhibitors were expensive (and illegal), but worth every penny.

The To-Oh grad had played to his across-the-board brilliance after graduation (first Omega ever) and made some key investments to guarantee his financial independence. Light checked them every morning, occasionally making adjustments, so in Kite’s defense, the Omega really did work from home. It was just that Light’s official job only took about an hour of his time.

His unofficial job, took a bit more effort.

Light didn’t even look up as he crossed the threshold into the Nonaka Tower. It was illegal for him, as an Omega, to own or work in a space like this, without proper vetting and safety installations. Most Omegas found the process too much of a hassle, so almost all businesses in the downtown area were populated solely by Alphas and Betas. Light cynically wondered if the government had realized how segregated the populations would become after the reconstruction.

He winked at the secretary from seven, as he boarded the crowded elevator. He pressed the button for 18, and offered a friendly nod to the lawyers from twenty five.
“Hey Killua,” the dark haired one greeted. Light catalogued his name as Victor. “You ever gonna join us for bowling night at the Badger?”

“Miku warned me you were trying to hustle the building,” Light said, cheekily, “I think I’d like to keep my money.”

“Aw, I’ll only take a little. Those boys should be paying you ten times what I’d take off you.”

“If that’s truly how the math breaks down, I believe I’ll have to pass, gentlemen.”

Light gave them a mocking salute as he ducked out onto floor eighteen, disappearing down the hall. He’d run background checks on everyone in the building, and knew that Victor’s bowling nights usually ended with a visit to an Omega strip club. Nothing illegal, but less than tempting for an Omega avoiding having his scent aroused. Those places were designed to scream SEX.

But, if it had been an Alpha strip club… Well, that was something Light just might have risked seeing. His pheromone suppressants wouldn’t be overly taxed, if he was merely trying not to crack up at the sight of a dominating Alpha shaking his ass.

Light sighed as he flicked on the lights to Freecss and Netero Financial LLC. It was well known that neither Freecss nor Netero ever came to their small Japanese office (and less well known that they never would, as only Light knew that they didn’t exist), but the lights made it seem like their accountant, Killua Zoldyck, was ever bubbly and reliably present. Though everyone knew those partners had the poor Beta running near constant errands.

Light ducked back into the hall and climbed a single flight of stairs. The offices at the bend in the hall on floor 19 were out of sight and rarely visited, as the space had been rented by a reclusive artist, lucky enough to have a wealthy patron to pay for the studio. An oddity in a building full of financial and legal types, but keeping with the Tower’s motto of promoting diverse business.

There was a ceramics studio on the second floor, and a dentist’s office on the third, for heaven’s sake. The mixture of professions made it just that much easier for an undercover Omega to blend in.

It was considered normal for the door to the Morow Studio to be locked twenty four hours a day, not that anyone ever came down to that little far corner to check it. Even the maintenance staff had been requested not to disturb the artist’s ambiance. Occasionally, the man would hang one of his
new paintings in the floor’s elevator lobby.

Light chuckled as he remembered talking with the boss of floor twenty. The bigwig was certain the kid was doomed to failure, and his poor patron was a conned fool. Light had been slightly offended at the time; he worked hard on those paintings.

Well, sort of…

Light carefully let himself into the studio, taking care to disarm the wire behind the door, so as not to activate the trap that would fry the entire network of surveillance tech, hidden behind a few of the artist’s strategically placed gallery walls. The system was also designed to look like an art installation at first glance; not likely to fool anyone long term, but might buy a small window of opportunity, if the studio was ever compromised.

The Omega hummed in contentment as he stepped into his real office. Complete with espresso machine and overstuffed arm chair. (Sometimes Light succumbed and indulged his Omega nature. Just a little bit.)

It wasn’t that he didn’t respect the laws mandating him to be accompanied by a Beta like Kite at all times. It was just that it was a lot harder to do illegal crime fighting activities in the presence of a government official.

So to work.

First objective, turn on the coffee. (Light was not ashamed to admit he was an addict, and he cheerfully blamed his last semester at To-Oh for it. He’d kept the small vice when he realized it made him seem more approachable.)

He settled into his seat and got down to work. He needed to find the routes the Yggdrassill family was using to smuggle their goods in and out of the city. Light knew he shouldn’t be referring to kidnapped members of his Dynamic as ‘goods’, but he’d had too many experiences with being just a little too late and seeing the corpses of the victims he couldn’t save in his father’s case files the day after. Therefore, he refused to let himself think of them as people, until he could be sure they’d live.

It was just too depressing otherwise. And Light really hated to lose.
By all accounts and statistics, Kanto was a fantastic place for Omegas to live. Most places were nowadays. But Light Yagami had grown up as the police chief’s son and had become intimately familiar with the distinctly unsafe sides of being an Omega.

The Yggdrassill family, for instance.

They were an international organization, and were somehow running a trafficking ring through Tokyo. Weapons, drugs, and humans all counted as inventory in the Yggdrassill logbooks. They specialized in supplying Omegas to wealthy buyers, but also tractable Betas, for both sex and muscle.

Light grinned darkly at the monitor, recalling the look on Shishio Yggdrassill’s face when the NPA descended upon his motorized enclave, arresting him and his son. They’d also rescued three Omega teens from the trunk in the process. The mug shot was now set as his background.

All possible because of countless hours of electronic investigating and lesser bits of actual legwork, compiled by what the family would label as a helpless, breedable commodity.

Anonymously of course.

Omegas were banned from field law enforcement for obvious reasons. He’d seen the two Omegas in his father’s precinct - glorified secretaries. Even if they tried, they were shunted away from real cases; all to protect their precious Omega innocence.

So rather than find himself in a dead end job with a hundred cops looking over his shoulder, the gifted brunette had hired himself as an independent private investigator. He could afford it and the puzzles crime solving presented were some of the few things he could hurl his intellect at full force. Plus he got the added bonus of absolutely wrecking the lives of Alphas like the Yggdrassills, who perpetuated the reasons for the discrimination against his Dynamic.

Light rolled his shoulders, ready for another long day of research and tracking. He would have to go out tonight to follow up his most promising leads, but he’d be damned if the rest of that family walked free.

He grinned behind his coffee mug as his personal system greeted him.
“Welcome back, Kira.”

L glared at the city sprawling out beneath the jet’s wing - Tokyo lacked the abundance of patisseries that he’d become accustomed to in Paris. The detective sat perched on the seat cushion, occasionally taking a bite of the red velvet cake balanced on his knees, as he made a mental aerial map of the region surrounding the airport.

It was nearing sunset, as the plane began its descent towards the private runway.

“L, I have Chief Inspector Yagami.”

“Thank you, Watari. Patch him through.”

The laptop screen on the table in front of him was suddenly filled with the face of an aging Alpha, sitting straight-backed at his desk in the NPA headquarters. L could hear the unidentifiable crackle of commotion on the other end. Busy day? He noted the haggard circles under the inspector’s eyes.

Welcome to my world, Mr. Yagami.

“Chief Yagami,” L opened, knowing the man could only see the large, gothic L on his end. “Any progress on the locating the missing Omegas?”

When L had first taken the case, he had expected to be able to solve it from his vacation condo in France.

But whoever was distributing XoXo was clever. He was both amused and annoyed that the criminals were cunning enough to lure him away from Angelina’s heavenly macarons.

How quickly the case had spiraled from simply locating the most probable synthesis labs, to tracking a rather large handful of missing Omegas being used as incubator test subjects was an
almost poetic practice in unraveling the criminal mind. The detective was pleased to have a challenge; even though it brought him into closer contact with Omegas than he really ever wanted to be.

L had calculated that an Omega’s natural scent led to a 8% decrease in his deductive reasoning capabilities. Add in any form of distressed (or heat) scent, and that percentage increased four fold. Omegas were a veritable liability when the world’s greatest detective just wanted to solve the puzzle.

Luckily, most of his work was done behind a computer screen, so the Alpha rarely had cause to lower his intelligence with actual human interaction. This case was rapidly becoming a nettlesome exception.

L took another bite of cake.

“Yes, earlier this afternoon, we were able to rescue two Omegas being transported through privately owned properties within the city.”

The detective’s fork clattered to the ground. How had they found them? Oh right, fork... He bit back a growl, at the complication this brought to finishing his cake. Fingers it was.

“How did you find them?”

“We received another anonymous tip…” The chief hesitated and L’s eyes narrowed. He knew where this was going.

“Kira, based on the similarities to his previous communications. Following the lead, however, we were able to intercept two of the trucks carrying the Omegas. The two we found have been identified as Marisella Figueroa and Natalia Krasko.”

“Where are they now?”

“The suspects are in custody and awaiting interrogation. The victims are at Takanawa Hospital. We have trauma specialists on site for when they wake up.”
“Move the suspects to a secure location immediately. Do not begin interrogations until I instruct you to.”

L ran his thumb over his lip as he watched the chief transmit his orders to his people. So Kira interferes again, huh? The older Alpha eventually looked back to the giant ‘L’ on his screen.

“Chief Yagami, what is your impression of Kira?”

The man’s eyes widened slightly and he coughed.

“He is intelligent. Based on the usual type of information he provides, ‘Kira’ is likely a hacker whose methods are less than legal, and therefore he hides behind the pseudonym. However, he has delivered photos that could only have been taken in person, so he likely conducts his own field work. His communications with the police are always short and untraceable, but obvious in their intent. He seems to be on our side.” The chief swallowed. “My personal opinion is that he is a brilliant detective.”

L smirked. So you want to play my game, Kira? Careful, it’s a dangerous one…

“Inspector Yagami, there is a 75% chance that Kira is a prominent figure within the underworld himself, as many of his ‘anonymous’ tips contain information only a higher up in one of the mob packs would know.”

“Then why would he continually contact the police?” the man on the monitor challenged, folding his arms. Politely. L rolled his eyes.

It seemed Kira was popular among the NPA. Interesting…

However, L was relatively confident that Kira was not, as the police seemed to believe, a ‘good guy’. For that to be true and for Kira to also provide the kind of information he did, the man would have to have been nearly as intelligent as L himself. Possible. But unlikely.

“The most obvious reason is that he wishes to cripple his competition. It is also conceivable, though improbable, that Kira suffers from a mental dissociative disorder, leading him to occasionally need to reach out to the police with what he knows. The fact that he has left the
calling card of ‘Kira’ suggests he seeks recognition and distinction for his efforts, likely from a compulsive need for admiration. Regardless, the odds of Kira not being involved at least tangentially with the underworld is less than 5%, and, as I said before, it is highly likely he holds a position of power.”

The chief shifted uncomfortably in the screen, and L contained a snort of amusement.

“However, my concern is the Yggdrassill’s production of XoXo, not Kira. I will expect a full reports on your potential suspects’ activities. Since the head of the family is behind bars, someone must have stepped up to take over operations.”

“Very well,” the older Alpha nodded, “I will have it emailed to you by tomorrow morning.”

“Thank you Chief Yagami. Please ensure that no word of the drug being transported with the Omegas is leaked. Do not include it in your reports or files. We do not want to do the mob’s advertising for them.”

Chief Yagami nodded again, and L disconnected the call. He felt the landing gear open and prepared to arrive in Japan.

He wondered how Kira would feel about the world’s greatest detective coming to play in his city. Despite L’s words to the chief, his gut told him not to ignore that 5% chance that Kira was simply the single most brilliant vigilante alive.

_I suppose if I have time, I’ll have to see just how clever you really are_, L thought, finishing the last of his cake.

__________________________________________________________
Light in the Dark

Chapter Summary

In which Kira find something he wasn't expecting.

Chapter Notes

My apologies if you got two notifications about this. There were some unforgivable typos that irked me enough to correct immediately upon second-oh who am I kidding-, eighth read through.

No important details altered though, so only read twice if you want to mock me for any other mistakes I missed (even after eight proof reads).

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The beanie covering the brunette hair under the black hoodie was itchy. The Omega in him, who liked soft, silken things, was beyond annoyed with it. Light forced himself not to fidget too much, as he wove through the maze of stacked freight containers on the dark shipping yard.

Three weeks worth of effort had led him here, to the Pondu Shipping Company freight yard, and the young Omega was ready to accept a Nobel Prize in sleuthing for the amount of effort it had taken to connect the dots.

The mechanism through which the Yggdrassills were getting their cargo into Tokyo had been… complex, to say the least. He’d slowly hacked his way into Shishio Yggdrassill’s accountant’s system, knowing that the family was too smart to have anything linking the higher-ups to, well, anything. But, the money, the money he could track. So Light had hunted down the man behind the finances. Finding him had been difficult; cracking his code had been a monumental feat of ingenuity.

The first step, identifying the numerous shell corporations belonging to the family, had been a cakewalk. He might owe an apology to some banks in Russia (and Cayman and Montenegro), but Light had been able to follow the funds down the rabbit hole to dispicable mafia wonderland.

But how were the Tokyo executives communicating with those chronies? There were no calls, letters, emails, visits, proxies (electronic or human) to be found. The Omega had nearly rage quit at the utter standstill his research had ground to, until he’d found that one little detail.
That one tiny thing.

Light doubted whether even the world’s greatest detective, L himself, would have been able to correlate the Yggdrassill accountant’s secretary’s lunch orders with the procurement of particular international freight shipping containers by the shell corporations. *One duty free smuggling box to go with that kung pao chicken, sir?* Honestly, no one should eat that much Panda Express.

There had been a steady stream of these boxes moving between Bogota (orange chicken), Johannesburg (broccoli beef), and Los Angeles (chow mein), going back years. But every now and again, when the secretary ordered the fried rice, a single box would be redirected for delivery to Tokyo. Five boxes had shipped out in the last week alone.

The Omega had nearly choked on his coffee when he saw that two of the boxes had arrived earlier today. *Shit.* He had already been late leaving the office to make it back before Kite came to collect him…

But Light could not let this opportunity slip away. He fell back into his seat and let his fingers fly.

First question: had the boxes been emptied yet? The brunette seriously doubted the Yggdrassill’s cargo would pass customs inspections, but, lo and behold, upon a quick hack into the Pondu Shipping Company’s records, the two boxes were already marked as having passed customs and been transferred out of the yard (three minutes after coming off the freighters). *Yeah right.*

Light rapidly pulled up the traffic surveillance system, planning to work backwards to find when and how the containers had been emptied, but, then… *Fuck.* Two unmarked, trucks were leaving the yard as he watched.

Once those trucks reached their destination, he’d have no way to track their contents. Light immediately sent a Kira communication to the NPA with the trucks’ current location, description, and suspicion of illegal content. Based on the size of the containers, Light was guessing pallets upon pallets of that new drug he’d been catching scattered references to.

After dispatching the NPA to the two trucks in motion, Light had run a quick search to find out when the next container was arriving, so he wouldn’t get caught off guard again. Today. 10:00 p.m. *Damn, that was a lot of cargo in one day. Something big had to be happening.*
The ship would be unloaded when it arrived, but the yard would be closed. It would be too suspicious for trucks to be coming and going after hours, so Light figured the Yggdrassils would come for the container first thing in the morning.

He’d just have to get to it before they did.

With that, Light had bolted out of his ‘office’, barely making it back to his Omega prison before Kite was knocking on the door. He hadn’t even had a chance to check if his police tip had paid off.

And six hours later, here he was, infiltrating one of the largest shipping yards in Tokyo, to get a look at whatever the Yggdrassils were working so hard to hide.

He held his breath as he crouched beneath one of the large semi-truck tires, waiting for the sentry to pass. Four guards in the yard. One in the security room. He’d taken down the surveillance system, from across the street, so that guard in the room was now watching reruns from last night.

Light crept forward and slipped between a stack of containers.

Skulking in the dark was not his favorite part of the job, but sometimes he didn’t have another option. It was dangerous because, though Light could hide his scent, could hide his unmarked neck, could mimic the body language of a Beta, there was nothing that could be done about the fact that in a physical confrontation with a real Alpha or Beta, he was at a distinct disadvantage.

He would just have to not get caught.

Light wove deeper into the maze of freight containers, darting between aisles, and hugging the sides, and freezing whenever he thought he heard movement. The container would be in the privately owned section, which should be near the dock... Two aisles and four rows down he found it, and paused to carefully scan the multitude of boxes for his target.

FR18B0X.

*Found you.* Light took some quick snaps of the box for documentation with his mini camstick. Another reason he enjoyed his work: the gadgets.
The container was on the ground, thankfully, but at the corner of an intersection of two main paths. If he tried to approach it, he would be exposed to view in multiple directions. Light snarled under his breath, pulling out his handheld to check on the guards locations. Just because he had the guards watching yesterday’s greatest hits, didn’t mean Light couldn’t watch the realtime feed.

None of the guards were near his location, and looked to be on routes that wouldn’t bring them back anytime soon.

He re-pocketed the device and went back to contemplating the box. As he turned his head he caught sight of camera just above his shoulder pointed directly at the container he was about to walk up to.

*What the hell?*

That wasn’t one of the feeds. There was a nice little red light indicating the camera was in fact functional.

He paused as he considered; did the Yggdrassill’s have their own security system online. That could cause trouble. But the camera looked like it had just been shoved up there, no installation whatsoever.

*So new, rushed security? Why…*

*Oh fuck.* Light wanted to hit himself as he realized what must have happened. He’d tipped off the police to the two trucks this afternoon. They must have seized the cargo. And now the Yggdrassills knew that someone was onto their shipping lane.

They wouldn’t have had time to unload this latest box, but they probably warned security here that it might be compromised.

But security cameras weren’t any use against police. *So, why…*

*They were looking for him.* Light knew the Yggdrassills had people inside his father’s office, so
they likely knew the existence of Kira. And would have known that Kira was the one who had sent the tip this afternoon, and had guessed that Kira might come looking for the next box.

*This was a trap.* Light was almost flattered, if he hadn’t almost been caught in it.

Trap. But… the cargo was still here…

The young Omega contemplated for a moment. If *his* drugs were stuck in a freight container that was likely going to be compromised soon, he wouldn’t just set up cameras. Light would have a guard posted right in front of the damn thing.

... *No.*

He would do one better. He would have the security company he’d paid off switch containers for him.

Light squinted at the markings on the box.

FR18B0X.

Nice and obvious. In unblemished, new paint.

The Omega smirked. *Clever.* The Yggdrassils had guessed he would be coming for the box with that number and had made sure it was nice and visible, then posted cameras to get a good look at their least favorite hacker. And the guards were probably ordered to give the container space, but ready to move in on a moment’s notice.

*Very, very smart. Too bad I’m better…*

If the fake container was here, then the real one would be close. It had to be in the same section, so which other one had fresh markings? *There.* The two boxes were close together, and Light grudgingly gave the Yggrassills another point for cleverness.
The real box was also in line of sight of the new cameras. So no matter which box he went to, real or fake, he was likely going to be seen.

And tripping the trap meant guards. Like all his Dynamic, Light had gone through the mandatory Omega self-defense training, but reality boiled down to him being hard pressed to defend himself against an Alpha or Beta thug. Particularly since those thugs typically had actual combat training. His fingers fiddled with the syringe in his pocket. *Just in case...*

All this passed through the back of his mind as he studied the real FR18B0X. He made a small detour through the alleyways between containers to get in a little closer.

The container had a thick padlock, but Light had long since mastered the art of lockpicking. (The young Omega had wanted to be sure that if he ever was kidnapped, his kidnappers would at least have to put some effort into holding him.) His fingers were just as clever with little bits of metal as they were with keyboards.

*So… How to get to the container and get away without getting caught? If he was glimpsed, his clothing was nondescript black and his face was hidden behind the hood. So, he just needed enough time to get to the box, pick the lock, snap a few pictures, and sprint away.*

Light grinned at the solution.

One guard monitoring the cameras could be distracted easily enough. It was childish, but, hey, Kira was childish. Light out his burner phone.

“Hello, FREY’s Famous Pizza. How can we help you?”

“I’d like to place an order for two large cheese pizzas for delivery... Pondu Shipping Company. Could you call this number when the driver gets here so I can buzz him in?”

“Sure, that will be ¥7,215. About 20 minutes.”

Light re-pocketed the phone and pulled out the handheld again. *Resetting the feed on the entrance so they pizza man doesn't look like a ghost… done...* He flicked back to the feed inside the security room to monitor the guard. Looking more closely, he could see the feeds from the rogue
cameras around the box. They had nearly had him. He shook his head.

Alright. Twenty minutes.

His muscles started to ache as the minutes ticked by.

Around minute eighteen, he felt his adrenaline ramp up. Damn it, keep it together Yagami.

He felt the buzz in his pocket. He answered, “Ring the front gate, they’ll let you in,” and hung up.

Light quickly flipped back to the feed of the guard room. The Alpha was sitting quietly, but then his head snapped over to the intercom. Light could see the guard glance back to where the delivery boy was waving on the monitor. The man checked the rest of the system before reaching for a gun belt (shit!) and heading out the door.

Fuck! I didn’t just get that boy killed, did I? No... Focus… They wouldn’t resort to killing immediately, now go.

He had maybe sixty seconds.

Light moved like he would in tennis, lunging towards his target. Fifty eight seconds.

He made short work of the steel padlock and deftly swung the latch. Thirty three.

He grabbed his camstick and heaved the door open. It was heavier than it looked and the Omega ground his teeth. Got it. He turned to see what the Yggdrassils had smuggled into his city. Thirty one.

What the fuck?

Light stared at the interior of the container, barely registering that, yes, yes there were, in fact, drugs inside. Thirty.
They were just being pumped through three separate IV’s into an unconscious body, chained and strapped to the floor. *Or maybe not so unconscious.* The body stirred weakly. *Twenty nine.*

Light had known the Yggdrassills trafficked Omegas, but this was supposed to be a drug drop for fuck’s sake. He was not prepared for a live kidnappee. The kid was barely conscious, no way was Light going to be able to get him out of here. *Twenty eight.*

His mind scrambled to process the reality of the situation. He should do what he came to do, get the photos and get the hell out. Then call the NPA. *Right.* It was the logical course of action. And this little Omega would be dead before the police ever got close. An Omega just like him… dead… *Twenty seven.*

*Fuck.* He wasn’t prepared for this. Light growled (and in the disconnected part of his brain was pleased that his Beta imitation was coming along nicely).

He had to try. *Twenty six.*

Light sprung into action as he made the decision, adrenaline sharpening his senses.

His hand still had the camstick, so he snapped several quick pictures while darting forward before tucking it back into the hoodie. The locks luckily needed no picking, just a deft hand, and he got the kid’s legs free. *Nineteen.*

The boy (Light saw they might be close to the same age, actually) was clearly out of it, but his head rolled around following LIght, as the brunette moved to rip the IVs out. Whatever had been in them apparently didn’t dampen pain, because the kid yelped and started struggling weakly. *Seventeen.*

Light moved around to the straps holding him down, and fumbled with getting them unfastened. *Ten.*

All that were left were the handcuffs. Light trembled a little more than ideal, but he was able to pick the locks holding the kid’s wrists to the floor. *Two.*

“Can you stand?” Light hissed. The Omega whimpered and shook his head, clearly expecting
punishment. *Fuck.* Light was strong for an Omega but not so much that he could carry another human very far, very quickly. *One.*

“Calm down, I’m not going to hurt you,” Light tried to sound reassuring despite his growing terror, “I’m getting you out of here.”

The Omega didn’t fight him as Light pulled one of his arms around his shoulders and slipped a hand beneath his waist. He was lighter than expected. Probably malnourished.

They were out of time. Assuming they’d had any to begin with.

Light lumbered to the door and peeked out. No one in sight. Yet. He hoisted his grip on the kid’s waist pulling him closer to upright. *Shit,* he smelled exactly like the distressed Omega he was.

Light dragged the kid to down the rows of boxes, directing them back towards hole he’d cut in the fence when he’d entered. When they were out of range of the cameras, Light started zigzagging through the maze of containers, trying to keep out of line of sight of any pursuers.

He heard shouting from behind. *Fuck that was quick.* The Omega was waking up a little, no longer having sedative pumped into him, and they made slightly faster progress. But not much, the kid was still weak as hell and high as a kite. Light grit his teeth and kept going.

His inhibitors were still working, but the kid was leaving an obvious scent trail.

*Fuck, fuck, fuck,* Light cursed, when he saw the flicker of flashlights approaching. From in front of them. He stopped dead.

Light quickly ran through their options. They were close water, having hugged the back edge of the property. Time for Plan… *oh fuck it, this wasn’t even on the list of plans.* Light spun and started dragging the kid towards the bay. That *had* been a backup exit strategy, back when he thought he would be leaving the yard alone. The water would help erase the trail of pheromones they were leaving, but the brunette Omega was not nearly as confident in his ability to swim two people to safety, as opposed to one.

Regardless, Light had no intention of getting caught. If that happened, he’d find himself locked in
his own freight container with god knows what getting pumped into his veins.

_C’mon. Almost there._ He threw a glance over his shoulder as he heard more shouting from behind. They were on the dock now… _Close, very close._

Light yelped as he felt a sharp hand grab his shoulder.

He immediately dropped the boy and swung around to crash his fist into the guard’s jaw. That self-defense training was apparently going to get a field test today. His fist found the mark, and Light was able to stumble back. The man threw out a hand to grab his wrist. And then...

The man threw out his scent. _Fuck. Alpha._

The dominating pheromones hit the Omega like a brick, screaming one simple command. _Submit._

Light’s eyes widened. His head instinctively lowered and tilted in submission, baring his neck. _Shit._ All Light’s natural instincts were telling him to still. He felt shivers run down his spine.

_No. No! Fuck that! I am not submitting! To anyone!_

Biology was hard to fight though, but fortunately, self-preservation instincts had evolved long before Omega instincts, so, in desperation, Light twisted away as the Alpha made a reach for his throat. The guard growled and hauled on the wrist he held, pulling Light towards him.

The younger man plunged his hand into his pocket for the emergency syringe and wrenched it out.

The massive Alpha unfortunately seemed to have some martial arts training, because he brought his knee up to crash into Light’s ribs.

_Crack._
It was a good thing the momentum of the Alpha’s pull had brought Light close enough to jab the syringe into his neck, because as soon as the man released his wrist, the Omega crumpled to the ground.

It took Light a few seconds to focus through the blooming pain in his side, but, blinking it away, he saw the guard stagger back, cupping his neck and looking murderous. His assailant started forward, stumbled, and collapsed.

_Holy fucking shit! He’d just taken down an Alpha…_

After processing that incredible fact, the Omega rolled away in utter agony, putting a hand to his ribs. He cursed himself, as he felt a primal need to go curl up against the Alpha’s side for protection in his wounded state. _Oh hell no._

_Have to move. Have to… Now…_

The kid was staring wide eyed at the guard, shivering and whimpering, probably feeling the same urges Light was, but too drugged to do anything about it. Light struggled to his knees and glanced back at the yard. The flashlights were closer. Three of them.

Light groaned and tugged the boy’s arm, as he half-crawled, half-rolled them to the edge of the dock and looked down at the black seawater. _This is really going to suck…_

With one final glance over his shoulder, he pushed them both over the edge. It was a fifteen foot drop, and they both yelped in shock as the icy liquid enveloped them. The cold actually helped clear Light’s head a bit, dulling the blinding pain in his ribs. The other boy started flailing uncoordinatedly in panic. Light was nearly knocked unconscious as an elbow clocked his jaw. _Damn it, stop!_

He threw his arms around the kid’s shoulders, clamping down hard and snaking a hand over his mouth to silence the cries. Light kicked, propelling them backwards to where he could grip the pylon and pull them beneath the dock.

_Need to move._ He carefully started dragging them away from under the unconscious Alpha above, trying to tread silently, as the voices got closer.
At least the water had washed away the kid’s scent. But the guards would start searching the bay, soon, and Light needed to cover a lot of distance before that happened. Cracked ribs were extremely unconducive towards that goal. So was the exhausted and weak dead weight he was hauling.

His original plan, if forced into the water, was to swim out into the main part of the bay and hide amongst the boats anchored there, eventually slipping out around the sea wall. Not possible now.

Light could hear the sounds of guards scrambling up above, could see flashlights sweeping the water out to the side. The Alphas were growling, clearly reacting to the scent of a distressed Omega. Their instincts were telling them to Hunt. Him. Down.

Light moved them silently as far as he could, tiring much too quickly. Two sets of feet ran past overhead and the brunette caught the words ‘water’ and ‘boat’.

Fuck. No choice now.

Time to move to the ‘all-else-fails contingency’. At least he’d gotten a waterproof burner phone. Light fished around in his pocket under the water and grabbed it.

And dialed the police.

“Please state your emergency.”

“Help,” Light whispered. He knew the call was being recorded, and he really didn’t want voice recognition to come back and bite him in the ass later. He did lean in though, so the microphone could catch the whimpers of the Omega in his arms. “Please help.”

“Sir, where are you, can you tell me your location?”

“Pondu… The Pondu docks. Help. They’re trying to kill me. Hurry. Please.”

“Sir, are you in a safe location? Can you hide?”
“No. They’re here. Help.”

Light didn’t wait for the operator to reply. He reached around to grab the boy’s hand. He forced the kid to somewhat dry his hands on the concrete pylon and then pressed the phone into his grip, folding the kid’s fingers around it. Hopefully a few prints would stick, despite the seawater. (Light handled all his burner phones with gloves, start to finish, so there was no chance of it being traced back to him. But it could prove that this other Omega had been here, at the scene.)

Light took the phone back and reached up to tuck it into one of the supports. There was no way the phone could have naturally fallen there, so the police would know it had been planted, but at this point, fuck it.

“Stay quiet,” he muttered, “We have to move.”

The police would be there shortly, with probable cause, and would hopefully cause enough of a stir that the two Omegas could escape. If he’d been anyone else, he could have just waited for the police to arrive. But he was Kira. And an Omega. If he got found, he’d find himself locked up in one way or another.

Never going to happen. He would never let himself be locked away into ANY cage.

His ribs had resumed throbbing even through the icy compress, and this time, it was Light holding back whimpers. He cursed his biology; this was why he didn’t just beat the shit out of the criminals he hunted, and why every Omega avoided physical confrontations. They just weren’t built for fighting. (Not that Light subscribed to the commonly held doctrine that stated Omegas were built for fucking.) But simple facts: sheer physical strength almost always went to the Alpha.

The growling along surface was getting fainter, as Light pushed them closer to the edge of the shipyard.

The rescued Omega was shivering uncontrollably, the drugs impairing his ability to regulate his body temperature.

“Hold on,” Light groaned. “We’re almost there.”
The boy didn’t show any sign of having heard him, but at least as long as he was shaking, Light knew he wasn’t dead.

They made it to the far wall, where the chain-linked land barrier met the concrete sea(115,767),(879,777)(115,770),(879,780) barrier. Light took small satisfaction having placed his entry point correctly. Just a few meters up from the water. Just in case. Though, at this point, anything that helped him was sheer dumb luck.

Light could hear sirens now, and the voices seemed to be farther away. It had worked.

The Omega doing the rescuing was breathing hard from his exertions, and every heaving gasp felt like a new knife, grinding into his chest. Almost there. Almost…

The pain started shutting down Light’s brain about the time he pushed the kid through the cut links of the fence, to unceremoniously roll down the small hill. With Light following after.

Road…

Car… Keys…

His mind could only process single words now, the adrenaline rush fading and leaving his body shaky and weak.

Almost there.

They might have tumbled down the hill, and then crawled the rest of the way to the car. Light wasn’t really sure anymore.

Fuck. Have to drive. The blaring sound of police sirens echoing down the road woke him up from his haze just enough. He, too, was shivering now, in the chilly night breeze. Both Omegas slumped against the bottom of the small black compact.

Light reached up and fumbled with the passenger door. It was perhaps the most graceless thing the
twenty-three year old had ever done in his life. Dragging and stuffing both their sopping selves into that little car. Dropping the keys thrice, with unsteady fingers.

Somehow he got the ignition started.

He couldn’t say how they made it to the highway, his shallow breathing not providing his brain with enough oxygen, and Light was merely thankful not to crash into a ditch with how blurry the traffic lights seemed.

The brunette drove on muscle memory alone, racking his crashing intelligence on what to do with the passenger sobbing softly in the next seat. The kid needed medical attention. And police protection. *Yggdrassils… after him…* The precinct was closer. Decision made.

The station would have surveillance. Light would have to park a ways away. *Please let the kid be able to walk.*

Several questionable stop signs later, Light pulled up behind a dumpster across the street, and started digging through his pockets. Handheld, syringe… *Crap, where was it? Got it!* He pulled out the camstick, and cracked open the plastic. Again, hallelujah for waterproof electronics. Light had originally planned on emailing the photos to the police as Kira was wont, but as tonight had proven, plans changed.

He fished out the SIM card and turned to the passenger.

“Can you walk?”

The boy’s eyes widened, terrified.

“That’s the police station there,” Light said pointing, “Take this. Ask for help. They’ll keep you safe… Go.”

He pushed the chip into the kid’s hands and gave him his best get-the-fuck-out look. The kid stared, clearly not believing what Light was telling him.
“Go,” Light yelled, and immediately gasped at the pressure it put on his ribs. “Go,” he whispered.

And the kid went.

Light watched just long enough to see the other Omega stagger within sight of the cameras, before he hit the gas and fled.

Chapter End Notes

Yay! Action scene!

In Chapter 2?

Author must be crazy...

Thank you everyone who has left comments and kudos. I flew through this chapter for you guys. It turned into more of a beast that I had expected - 4400+ words. Please let me know what you think and if you find anything wrong, yell at me. Loudly! I am no exception to the authors-love-feedback-and-are-so-very-addicted-to-it rule! And don't worry, Light might have gotten this chapter all to himself, but L hasn't left town.

Mind games begin!

Next chapter!

Much more Death Note-esk!
Fresh Eyes

Chapter Summary

L has a trail of cake crumbs to follow, and follow he does.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“L, I believe you will want to see this.”

The Alpha glanced up from the file he was studying (a preliminary report on the effects of XoXo). He rose to follow Watari out into the main office of the condo, grabbing a lollipop as he passed the kitchen counter. He immediately found his interested piqued upon seeing Chief Yagami on Watari’s screen. Good evening inspector. Isn’t it past your bedtime?

It was near 3:30 a.m. L wasn’t used to having company at such times.

“Chief Yagami,” the detective addressed, “I take it something has happened.”

The inspector jumped slightly at L’s computerized voice, but he regained his professional composure quickly.

“Yes. Thirty-six minutes ago, an Omega arrived at the precinct. He appears to be heavily drugged and does not seem to understand what is happening, but he was carrying a SIM card containing… photos.”

“Have you seen what is on them?”

“Yes, it appears to be documentation of a raid on the Pondu Shipping yard. The first set of images seem to be still shots from security cameras around the yards. They document the coming and going of certain employees and some known members of the Yggdrassill organization. The second set seem to be photos taken in person. According to the time stamp on the files, the photographer broke into the shipping yard around two hours ago. There were close shots of two different freight containers and the contents of one. Those contents being the Omega that brought the card in. The photos show that he was in a similar condition to the two Omegas we rescued
“So this Omega was likely one of the test subjects? Anything linking XoXo to the family?”

“Several of the shots show the Omega connected to an set of IVs, likely containing illegal drugs. We've identified him as Haru Hayashida - disappeared thirty nine days ago. He is being transferred to the hospital now; where they'll draw blood to confirm what is in his system. Though, if he was on XoXo, it would explain his erratic behavior.”

“I see. And the photos give no indication of how the Omega got from that box to the precinct?”

“No. The last photo is a closer shot of the Omega while he was restrained.”

“I see. Send the photos, and…”

“There’s something else,” the chief interrupted. L tilted his head, curious at the chief’s sudden tension.

“About forty minutes before the Omega arrived, an emergency call came in from someone claiming to be in danger at the Pondu Shipping Yard. Two cars were dispatched, but were met with security at the gate, who denied any trouble. The guards showed the officers surveillance footage, and they walked the main part of the yard, but didn’t find anything suspicious. They had just left, when the Omega arrived. After the card was checked, the dispatcher ordered the officers to return and secure the scene. They caught the security guards burning the contents of the box from the photos. They’ve locked down the yard and have taken the security guards into custody, on suspicion of kidnapping and Omega trafficking. The forensics team has just been dispatched.”

L processed the development with wide eyes. These kind of breaks in cases only happened in bad crime TV; someone was pulling strings here… “The emergency call, send me the recording.”

The detective rubbed his lips against the lollipop, thinking fast. The Omega had not arrived at the station on his own. Had the Yggdrassils released him? Certainly not for his health and well being, but maybe as a distraction of some sort? Division amongst the ranks? Or had someone rescued him and delivered him with a SIM card shaped-bow?
L’s head snapped up.

*Kira.*

Either way, there was a chance they had the Yggdrassills shipping lane; they needed to move fast. Before the henchmen and lawyers showed up… Erasing the evidence… *Damn-*

“Chief Yagami, it is likely the security camera footage has or is being tampered with to erase whatever happened tonight. Tell your men to secure it immediately.”

“Oh um, they did. The recordings for the last two hours are missing.”

L growled. His trust in the NPA competence was minimal, especially with a mole among their ranks, and without video evidence, he would either have to take their word for what came to pass or go find his own answers.

Something wasn’t adding up…

If Kira had been targeting the Yggdrassill family’s operations and had found and opportunity to seize one of the Omega test subjects, would he rescue him? That would fit the vigilante profile, but not the criminal competitor profile. Any competitor of the Yggdrassills would have taken the Omega for themselves. Unless they were trying to get the Yggdrassills arrested. Was Kira truly trying to help? Or was this a set up? The detective needed to decide quickly which assumption to work under.

L realized the inspector was waiting for him to speak. He made his decision.

“Chief Yagami, I will be sending someone to study the crime scene. His name is Ryuzaki. He will be my eyes on the ground.”

“Of course, I will let the men at the scene know he is coming.”

L disconnected and went to change. The Yggdrassills were slippery. So was Kira. He needed to see for himself who was responsible for what tonight and who he was going to send to jail first.
“Will you be out for the rest of the morning then?” Watari asked from the closet doorway.

“Most likely.”

“If you’re going for unrecognizable, might I recommend a suit? No one would ever suspect.”

L rolled his eyes. Trench coat and fedora was as far as he was willing to go (even if Watari wore it better). But he was the detective pretending to be the detective's assistant; sometimes he had to dress the part.

“Get Matt to start digging around the deep web for this Kira. If he’s not part of the criminal scene, then he’s a hacker of considerable talent. I want to know how he’s getting intel before the police can.” How is he getting it before I do?

“Will do, sir.”

L tightened the belt of the trench and stormed out.

L leaned over the railing, groping for what he knew was down there. Got it.

“Pull me up.”

The two detectives holding his legs, pulled him back up onto the docks. He stayed crouched to examine the phone. Emergency call in progress. He ended it. Battery life was at 8%. It was a burner phone, L was sure, and he could detect the faintest traces of an Omega’s scent on it.

He pulled up the call history. Two calls. The police and a private number. He pressed redial. FREY’s Famous Pizza?
“Get this processed for fingerprints and see if you can find where it was purchased.”

_C’mon Kira, let me find you._ He was now almost completely certain that’s who had started this ruckus.

At this point, L was considering offering the man a job. Fifteen minutes into his drive to the yard, Matt had called to screech at him. Apparently, Kira had lain some cyber boobytraps for anyone who might come digging for him and Matt’s entire system was now crashed. Combine that with planting a burner phone with an ongoing emergency call to lead the NPA right to it… _Smart._

The detective stared out into the open bay. _You did not swim out, not with that Omega… You wouldn’t have had time. You crept along under the docks… to where?_ L glanced left and right, and suddenly grinned.

The freighter to his right belonged to Seaboard Maritime, of the United States. American. And Americans put cameras on everything.

“Detective Matsuda. Get a warrant for any footage from that ship for the last four hours.”

“Y-yes sir!” the young Beta stammered sprinted away.

L retraced his steps to the container, following the lingering unmistakable scent of a distressed Omega. The Alpha could feel himself longing to seek out the creature and protect it. But there was no trace of anything else…

Kira didn’t mind breaking some hacking laws. Would he be willing to break some controlled substance laws? Pheromone suppressants? L wanted to slap himself. If Kira was willing to break and enter, of course he’d be using the illegal scent blockers.

Alphas and Omegas had some control over the strength of their scent, but not enough to hide it entirely. There was no ‘off’ switch. Unless you were willing to chemically force it off. Suppressants were illegal for many reasons, but the mostly because they were hell on the endocrine system.

_Do you not care about your own health, Kira?_
Self-sacrificing had not not part of L’s profile for Kira. But tonight was challenging a lot of those assumptions. He’d classified Kira as: arrogant, highly intelligent, a glory hound. But self-neglectful? It didn’t quite fit… He needed more of the puzzle pieces.

L reached the square where the photographs of the boxes had been taken. It was clear that the guards had rushed to destroy as much evidence as they could in the window between the first and second arrival of the police.

The inside of box MY607X had been doused with accelerant and burned all to hell. It was still smoldering as the Alpha watched Detective Mogi supervise the collection of samples from the two melted IV’s. The third IV from the pictures was the only thing missing.

L turned back towards the entrance and stopped. Those weren’t in the files… Three camera angles not on the plans for the yard security system? Interesting…

“Detective Aizawa, do we have the feeds from those cameras.”

The senior officer on the scene looked up, and stared at the surveillance. “Um, I don’t think so. Let me check.”

He disappeared and L returned to studying them closely. They were not installed correctly, but had an actively recording light on. The detective triangulated the line of sight and found they were pointed at a container, three boxes to the right of where the Omega had been kept (though that container was also in the field of view).

L pulled out his phone and flicked through the pictures that had been delivered with the Omega. The first ones were focused on the same box the security cameras were pointed at.

FR18B0X

But then the photos suddenly jumped to box MY607X. The Omega’s container was not even in focus in the first few photos.
Box FR18B0X was though…

L considered. Whoever had taken the pictures (probably Kira) had focused on that box first, but then switched to the other… *Why?*

What had caused the photographer (certainly Kira) to switch targets?

*… the cameras.***

Did you deduce it was a trap?

L considered the possibility. The photographer had come here looking for box FR18B0X. He’d seen the cameras pointed at it and determined that something was wrong. The Alpha stared at the box. Did you start here and realize it was the wrong container? But the photos don’t show you even getting close, like you did with the other box… Whatever you noticed, you noticed from a distance.

L went back and took a hard look at box MY607X. He tilted his head, noticing the seam between the door and the sides, where the fire had licked through to scorch the outside of the box. There were sooty smears moving up the edge, but there was a darker patch in the middle, right where the designation was. L’s eyes widened.

*Fresh paint.*

The box had been relabeled. His head whipped over to the other box. Also newly painted. *And you got all this from security cameras?*

That was incredible brain power, if Kira had been in the middle of infiltrating a highly secure storage facility (with suspected mob ties) and still had the presence of mind to profile his targets. L felt a thrill of excitement that quickly died when he thought of the other possibility.

*Or did you know all along?*

L growled at the likelihood, causing Detective Mogi to raise an eyebrow. The detective was
secretly and desperately hoping Kira was not just some mob henchman who had been instructed to undermine the XoXo’s brilliant plan and confuse the NPA in the process. There were known rifts inside the Yggdrassill pack; they could be trying to sabotage each other.

But L would much prefer it Kira was just ‘that’ good.

Alright, so either way this box is a trap…

“Detective, we need to evacuate and call a bomb squad. Box FR18B0X is likely rigged with some sort of explosive device.” L said, his monotony at complete odds with the fact that he had just announced the presence of a bomb.

Detective Mogi’s mouth dropped open. “Fuck! Everyone get back!”

L turned, and headed back towards his car to process all that he had learned, popping the collar of his trench coat in true PI fashion as he went. If he had to wear it…

L’s hand clicked the replay button for the thirty second time. He was on his seventh piece of cake for the morning.

Because it had turned out, Kira was ‘that’ good.

All the security tapes around the time of the crime were blank. Either the guards had wiped them, or, more likely, Kira had hacked them and played a looping feed while preventing any actual recording of his presence.

The exceptions were the feeds from the three cameras pointed at box FR18B0X.

So that’s how you knew… You’d hijacked the main system prior to arriving, and when you noticed the new additions, you became suspicious and stopped to reevaluate. Impressive.
And you were able to tell which box was real because of the paint... Again, impressive.

L pressed play and watched again as Kira came into view. (99.9% certainty that’s who was beneath the black hood.) The vigilante was athletic, tall, and completely covered in baggy black fabric with no labels.

He appeared by running directly to the real box and picking the lock. *More illegal habits, Kira?*

Everything up until this point, all thirty some seconds, Kira had done with purpose and haste. *You knew they would see you, but you continued anyway...* L munched on his cake and added ‘over-confident’ to his list of descriptors.

But then Kira stood perfectly still for 5.26 seconds in front of the open box. Not even taking pictures. The Alpha paused the recording.

*You were surprised. You did not expect to find what you found... That means you are not a henchmen for the Yggdrassills, at least. I wonder, what did you expect to find?*

L grinned. He unpaused the video. Kira reappeared from inside the box, carrying the Omega and obviously hurrying to get gone. *And here you play the hero. How very Batman of you...*

The detective pulled up the feed from the American ship. Apparently Kira had only hacked the system of the yard itself. *That tells me you weren’t planning on this exit strategy. Logical, since you hadn’t planned on finding that particular cargo...*

This feed was fuzzy, the dock being far in the background, but L was able see enough to have a good idea of what had happened.

Two figures, one heavily leaning on the other, appeared on the east side (presumably Kira and the Omega, as likelihood of two unauthorized pairs of people wandering around the shipping yard was laughable), quickly making their way west towards the water. *Hmm, either you had no other choice, or you are too inexperienced or arrogant to know how hard it is to swim with human cargo...*

A third figure appeared. The altercation between the guard and the vigilante was inexplicably
stressful for L to watch. Odd, since he knew who was going to win. The first time he had seen this, he had immediately paused to call Chief Yagami and order a sweep of the entire area surrounding the docks. And thus, they had found one more Alpha security worker, lying unconscious under a tarp in a dingy. The other guards had hid his body when the police showed up the first time.

*Back to the fight...* L could tell that Kira had minimal martial arts or combat training, based on his stances, but yet he’d won.

The shot was grainy, but it looked like Kira might have punched the man twice: once when he spun around and again, just as the guard had landed a hit on his side. Based on the way the man in black fell, Kira had sustained heavy damage from that blow.

L paused the recording to ascertain where the low rumbling was coming from. *Oh, it was him… Curious…* The Alpha was admittedly pissed that he was watching one of the few people who could possibly match his level of intelligence being physically beaten with intent to kill, before L had a chance talk to him, but that didn’t warrant growling at the computer.

*Moving on…*

*Kira and the Omega were down… The guard backs up… Steps forward… and collapses. That’s a neat trick, Kira…*

L laughed as he realized what had happened. *You hit him with a sedative.* L made a mental note to have the NPA run blood work on that guard to see what Kira was using, and if it could be tracked.

Then L watched the most nerve wracking part of the video. Kira could no longer stand, and the Omega was too drugged to do much. They struggled to the edge of the dock, and then fell over to disappear into the black water. About five seconds later, three more guards arrived.

The raven haired detective paused again and ran his thumb across his lips The phone had been in the supports under the dock. The time stamp on the video indicated the call had been made after the pair had disappeared into the water.

*You were injured and cornered… So you called the police to give yourself a window with which to escape… I bet that was your last resort. You could have waited and turned yourself and the*
Omega over into protective custody right then but… You didn’t want to be caught. You don’t like to lose, do you Kira?

Kira had left the phone though, so L doubted there would be anyway to trace him through it.

There was one other thing that was bugging the Alpha.

Why call a pizza place in the middle of a job? It made absolutely no sense.

He broke it down step by step. Why does anyone call a pizza place? To get pizza. Are you so addicted to melted cheese, you had to have pizza delivered while you were breaking and entering? No. Delivery to the yard? You had it delivered to the guard. To drug them? No. Just as a distraction. You knew they were watching those cameras, so you had the pizza boy get the guard out of the room, and watched from their own security cameras, then got to the box.

L grinned.

Kira... I can’t wait to meet you...

Chapter End Notes

L struts his stuff with a chapter all his own. Gotta catch up to that Kira!

Now, here's the thing. I know what's happening. You know what's happening. But L only knows what the evidence is telling him. So if the author erred and L knows something he shouldn't, grouch about it. Same with any unfathomable leaps in logic. Though L is supposed to be smarter than all of us, so...

Anywho, I hope you like it! Let me know your thoughts. And thank you all for the awesome support; it keeps us writers going!
Real Life

Chapter Summary

Light forgot to set an alarm.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Bang!

Light jolted out of his sleep. *What-the-fu-wha-time-is-huh?*

Bang!

He reflexively moved to sit up, and immediately collapsed back to the bed, trying not to breathe. *What the hell?* And then the memories of his adventure at the shipping yard flooded back to him. *Holy fucking titballs,* broken bones hurt. He’d run a self diagnosis when he made it home, almost drunk on exhaustion, and, after confirming that he likely wasn’t going to die, the Omega had promptly collapsed on his bed, unconscious before his head hit the pillow.

Bang, bang, bang!

“Light! You there?”

The brunette groaned, and pulled himself upright. He was naked, and he had a brief flicker of panic as he tried to remember what had happened to his clothes. *Right,* he’d removed in the salt crusted attire in the bunker and had changed into the red bathrobe he kept there to minimize tracking his scent back and forth. And then he hadn’t had the energy to throw on his pajamas. So his current outfit was inappropriate for answering the door. *Wait! Someone was at the door!*

*Shit, who was it? The cops?* Light glanced at the window, debating if he should go down the fire escape.
“Light! I know you’re in there! Open up!”

Oh, it was just Kite… That wasn’t much better. Again Light’s mind wasn’t firing on all cylinders yet and it took him a moment to process that, if Kite was here, he’d been asleep for a little over twelve hours. Damn it! He’d had things to do today.

He needed to check the police reports for the incident last night to confirm what they knew about him; and he needed to figure out why the hell that Omega had been in a shipping container in the first place.

He did not have time for normal day-in-the-life-of-an-Omega nonsense. (Whatever incompetent, sadistic god had decided he should find the Yggdrassill shipping network the night before his mating interviews needed to be fired.)

He pushed himself to his feet, a burst of adrenaline momentarily overpowering the pain, and darted to his closet, ripping the blue bathrobe off the hook. If Kite ended up thinking he’d spent the day naked, checking his stocks in the buff, well, the Beta had seen worse.

He tugged the soft cotton around himself, groaning as he had to stretch his right arm out to put it in the sleeve.

“Yagami! I will break this door down!” Kite’s good natured voice resounded.

“Don’t hurt my door!” the Omega called back and then coughed. Oww… He must have swallowed more seawater than he’d realized; he sounded like a chain smoker.

Amber eyes swept the room, looking for anything that might look out of place. The desk was tidily messy, like it had been worked at all day, the bookshelves lacked dust, the bed was unfortunately rumpled… but overall, it looked like a cleanly Omega spent significant time here.

Light opened the door.

The Beta looked him up and down and snorted. “You’re not ready. Should I be surprised?”
Light looked down at his bathrobe; grimacing. No, he certainly shouldn’t go out dressed like that.

“I’ll be out in fifteen?”

Kite smirked. “I’ll wait here.”

The brunette shut the door and hustled to get ready.

It was perfectly legal for Companion Betas to enter an Omega apartment building, or even the apartment itself. Not so much so for an Alpha. But it was highly illegal for a Companion to enter into any potentially sexually charged situation with their Omega, emergencies excepted. Being in an apartment where an Omega was about to shower and dress - Betas had been arrested for less. (When the Omega opened the door in his bathrobe… well, that was a bit of a grey area.)

Light had no qualms about Kite’s propriety whatsoever, but after what had happened with his previous nanny, the brunette was comforted by Kite’s by-the-book attitude. Ironic, considering Light himself was very much not by the book.

The Omega immediately went straight to the medicine cabinet and downed three aspirin. His patience was short enough when it came to interviews; if he had to go through it with broken bones, there was a good chance one of those idiotic Alphanist blowholes would end up getting Light’s martini thrown in his face.

Light considered a moment, then set the bottle aside to take with.

He held his wrist to his nose and sniffed. Good, the inhibitors had worn off. It would be hard to explain why an Omega didn’t smell like one. (It had been quite a shock the first time he’d used them and they’d faded; he hadn’t known what he smelled like before that. Cherry blossoms and chocolate; a small vain part of him was pleased, there were worse things to smell like.)

And now for the ribs…

He shrugged out of his robe to assess the visual damage, and cringed. A deep red bruise, already starting to shade to purple, expanded outward from his sixth and seventh ribs. *Fuck.* The mating agencies did full physical and mental evaluations weekly, to check for signs of abuse, fertility, and
overall well being (or as Light translated: mate-ability) of the Omega. His apartment complex also required documentation for any accidents or injuries. So… fuck.

Light threw on the water to the shower then tiptoed back to his home laptop. He would have to fake an accident report. It didn’t help that the bruise was distinctly knee-shaped. Tennis? He could claim he’d stood in front of the ball machine and been hit… Except then he would have to forge a check-in to the courts for the day. No, it would be best to go with a nondescript fall. Down the stairs? While doing laundry? That would cover all the bases; plausible, no witnesses, believable misjudgement of the severity of the injury…

Light sighed as he submitted the lies, counterfeiting the time stamp, and went back to step into the warm water. Just the fall of water against his side caused it to throb. He rushed through the shower and went to get dressed.

He slipped into his khakis and brown V-neck, not bothering to style or dry his hair; frankly Light didn’t give a shit about dressing up for Alphas trying to court him right now.

When he opened the door a second time, Kite tucked a romance (romance? Really Kite?) novel back into his jacked.

“Let’s get this over with,” Light griped, making for the stairs.

“Oh it’s not that bad, and you know it,” Kite grinned, “You get free dinner and as many drinks as you want. All you have to do is smile and play nice.”

Light had registered with a mating agency outside of town to reduce the already unlikely possibility that any of the Alpha’s from Nonaka Tower would show up and get an unfortunate surprise, when they found themselves across the table from Killua Zoldyck, Beta accountant. It meant a longer drive, but Light used it get caught up on the day’s news.

That he had so imprudently slept through…

There was a small mention of an incident at the Pondu Shipping Company; but all it said was that police had been dispatched and refused to comment. *Translation: the police had begun a real*
investigation. They would have just reported it as a false alarm, otherwise. Light sighed and began calculating the possible ramifications of last night’s adventures.

He needed to do damage control. Maybe he should go into the office after he was done not mating… Couple cups of coffee, no Alphas, extra aspirin… Yes, that’s what needed to happen…

It was only these Thursday nights that Light had to regularly play the part of a normal Omega; unfortunately, that meant Kira had a pattern of never sending up-to-date tips on Thursday nights. And this particular evening, there was a multitude of things Kira needed to be doing; the Yggdrassill’s were likely moving to contingencies. Kira needed to find out what those were before the trail was gone. And the police would certainly screw it up without him.

Not to mention Light and his hatred of losing.

An hour later, when the aspirin was at least partially working, Kite pulled up to the Omega entrance of the Eastern Kanto Dynamic Relations building. Alphas arrived on the public side, but Omegas entered and exited from a private door at the back in unmarked, black sedans. The agency had identical decoy vehicles that arrived and departed the same way, so stalking an Omega leaving the agency would be near impossible. That had been a popular modus operandum for serial rapists early on.

“Light! Hey!”

Light glanced up and waved at the pretty female Omega getting out of a car three spots up. Kiyomi Takada was one of the few people Light did not detest at his weekly interviews. She was intelligent and funny, and just as clear sighted about the absurdity of this charade as he was.

If Omegas had been allowed to mate each other, Light might have considered Takada as a viable option. Maybe.

However, Omega-Omega relationships were strictly illegal, defined as ‘Alpha baiting’. That had been one of the positions Alpha supporters had held firm to, during the reform. ‘A flagrant waste of potential employed merely to spite Alphas who wish for nothing else than to care for those Omegas’ was how the Chairman of the party had phrased it; that man, completely coincidentally, was also leader of the British arm of the Yggdrassill pack. Light had put ‘high-risk’ tabs on him early on. But as the law stood, Omegas were only allowed romantic relations with each other if they each had an Alpha mate who approved of the union.
(Omega-Beta relationships were frowned upon, though legal. Several special licenses were required to allow one, particularly for determining how the Omega would spend his or her heat. In some rural regions, it was mandatory for the couple to employ an Alpha ‘sitter’ to care for the Omega during those times.)

Kite waved goodbye, and Light chatted casually with Kiyomi up to the exam offices, where he left her at her caseworker's door.

“Let me know if you find your soulmate tonight!” she called over shoulder, laughing.

Light shook his head and went to knock on his own caseworker’s door.

“Come in,” the deep, female voice called. The brunette Omega cringed and turned the knob. His caseworker had not started as one of the few people he didn’t despise at these events. But Light had warmed up to her.

Sort of…

“What the fuck, Light?” Rem demanded, slapping a file down on her desk. Light tried not to roll his eyes as he took a seat in armchair across from her.

“Hello, Rem.”

“Do not ‘Hello Rem’ me. I just received an email from your complex saying you have two broken ribs. They sent the report less than hour ago. I’ve had to scramble your entire schedule because of this!”

“Really?” Light asked, sarcastically, “Oh, wait. I forgot. Alpha’s like their goods undamaged right?”

“Oh for god’s sake, Light. You’re an Omega. Any injury to your core could impair your ability to bare children. That is a perfectly legitimate concern for an Alpha to have when looking for a mate.”
“Rem, I believe I got top marks in my anatomy class, so I think I can say with full confidence that my ribs are a considerable distance from my ass. Which is all an Alpha really cares about,” Light had a new thought, “If I break my tailbone, can we cut down the number of Alpha’s I have to meet?”

“If it’s on purpose, you will be charged with willful destruction of Japanese breeding potential. Though if you continue to piss me off with - what was it?” she glanced back at the file “laundry accidents, I’ll consider kicking that ass myself. Now shut up.”

Light rolled his eyes and settled in to let Rem interrogate him.

What was he looking for in a mate? Why did he think he wasn’t mated already? What qualities would he find attractive in an Alpha? Did he want children? How many? On and on… The same questions he answered every week.

A lot of the other reps actually had a real therapy session with their Omegas. Rem had tried that with Light the first couple times, but he threw all her psychoanalysis bullshit right back, so now she only bothered with the mandatory questions.

“Alright strip and hop up on the table.”

Rem was a certified Omega physician, and so was allowed to see him naked. Part of the certification required her to have her own mate, but Light couldn’t fathom what poor sucker would mate Rem Shori, Beta, Omega Relations Rep, Bitch Royale. But hey, he wasn’t mated. What did he know?

Light shrugged out of his clothes and climbed onto the table. Rem turned around and saw the bruise.

“Fuck, Light. What kind of laundry were you doing?”

“The kind that hits back, apparently. I believe it was a delicates load.”

“How much pain?”
“A bit.” *A lot.* “I took aspirin, it’s working for now.” *Sort off…*

Rem shook her head, “I’ll get you a script for something a bit stronger, but with ribs there’s not much that can be done other than rest and pain meds. Hold on, I’m going to take an X-ray to make sure there’s no bone fragments floating around.”

Light had no objection to just laying while Rem did her work. It was less painful, even if he was a bit cold lying there naked. He was rarely thankful for the Omega exams, but at least this meant he would get treatment without leaving a hospital record. The Yggdrassills were likely checking for anyone coming in with these injuries, in the last twelve hours.

“You have two ribs with nasty fractures, and two more with bad bruising. They seem to be setting alright. Just stay in bed as much as possible and don’t do any more laundry for the next couple weeks.”

The Beta snapped on gloves and pulled out an empty syringe. She snatched his right arm, tied a quick tourniquet over his bicep, and felt around for the vein. Not being particularly fond of watching things stab him, Light chose to stare at her desk (*was his file always that thick?*) while she drew his blood. Unfortunate temperament aside, Rem was good at her job. She got the sample and pressed the cotton to stop the bleeding within a minute.

“Scent glands next.”

Light extended both wrists, then tilted his head head for her to snap quick photos of his unmarked skin.

“At least the laundry didn’t bruise those. Alright, roll over. Be careful of those ribs.”

The Omega complied and let her check his kidneys and lungs. He twitched as he felt her move to his ass and spread his cheeks. He hated this part.

“Little cold. Swab next. Done.”

Light felt his muscles release their tension.
“Go ahead and get dressed.”

When the Omega was back in his seat, Rem pulled out a stack of files for him to review. *Ah yes, the reason he was here, the Alphas looking to take him home as a fuck toy tonight.*

Omegas met with five Alphas in the course of an interview night, and it was well publicized as mandatory, so candidates wouldn’t become territorial about their prospective mate meeting with other Alphas. The backlog of Alphas seeking mates was so high that it usually took two months before an applying Alpha could get an interview with an Omega. The Alphas seeking mates were required to meet with at least two Omegas each night, to prevent obsessions from developing. Combine that with personal preferences, heat schedules, and hormones. (Light had forgiven Rem some of her bitchiness, when he’d learned what sort of logistical nightmare of a job she had.)

Light skimmed the names and groaned. “Really Rem? You gave me Amane again? I thought I got some sort of say in this.”

“The Misa Amane is an exemplary Alpha prospect. She is wealthy, good looking, and cares about you very much. She has never overstepped her bounds, and so is fully within her rights to continue to attempt to court you.”

The brunette rolled his eyes. And logged the rest of the names he would have to remember for the next two hours. Misa Amane, Teiji Yokoyama, Raku Nakanoi, R. Ryuzaki, and Koko Shintaro.

Light’s eyes widened as he read the last name. Koko Shintaro. That was Shishio Yggdrassill’s personal assistant. *What the fuck!!!!* He vibrated in his skin for about five seconds, trying to stay calm - and failing - as he ran through the possibilities of how the Yggdrassills had found him. *Shit, no time... have to get out...*

“Rem, I need to exchange-”

“Sorry Light. But with the scramble I had to do from your injury, you’re stuck with those.”

“Can you at least give me Kite then?” Light asked, desperately.
Rem stopped to raise her eyebrows at him. The chaperones were discouraged from actually chaperoning the dates, since Alphas instinctively became defensive while trying to court an Omega, and then the Omegas got nervous, and the Alphas reacted, and the Betas were required to intervene, and nobody ended up looking good. In cases where Omegas had history of trauma with Alphas however, it was allowed. Not that Light had ever asked for it before.

“For all of them?”

“Just the last one.”

Light tried not to sound as shaken as he was. Shintaro had the title ‘assistant’, but Kira knew she was a jack-of-all-trades, including assassination.

“Alright, but jesus calm down. I can smell you from here. She cleared the background check, nothing to worry about.”

Light nodded, cognitive reasoning pushing through the initial panic. She wouldn’t have come to a mating interview to kill him. Probably. She’d do that where there weren’t cameras every six feet. *Shit, he was going to be able to go home*. Why would she be here? Because she knew he was Kira? Because his father arrested her boss? Because he was an Omega? All of the above?

Or to actually court him? Light snorted. *Right, like any of these Alphas were here actually here to get to know him*. She wasn’t going to kill him yet, but he would have to tread very, very carefully.

“Last thing,” Rem interruped, as she finished labeling the samples. “I have you marked as starting a heat next week, is that correct?”

“Only if you don’t let me take suppressants.”

“You had your last heat two months ago. It would be a good time have the next one, if you have time. If you don’t, next month you’ll have to have it no matter what.”

“Rem, broken ribs? Now is definitely not a good time.”
“Yeah yeah yeah, I’ll get both scripts over to the pharmacy. You can pick them up on your way out. You know the drill: start taking the suppressants the day you feel your pre-heat start.”

Light stood and moved towards the door.

“Oh and Light?” He glanced back. “Try to give Misa Amane a chance.”

The door slammed. Hard.

Chapter End Notes

Gee Light, are you sure you should be worrying about the fifth interview? What about that fourth one?

Guess what L's been up to! No not that, the other thing. Gah, I should stop typing before I give it all away. (Or at least what I know so far.)

Anywho, let me know what you think. I just have to edit the next chapter, so it should go up tomorrow. Two chapters in two days! All because you pebbles' feedback has been so awesome.

Let me know what you think!
Teatime Victimology

Chapter Summary

L is sorting through the puzzle pieces, not so slowly but ever so surely fitting them together.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Ninety minutes earlier...

L glared at the headshots of the four Omega victims laid out on the table. He let out a small growl. *I save one, Kira saves three. 10 - 40. Game point.* It was childish, but, *grrr*, he hated losing. *Anyway...*

Immature games with cheating vigilantes aside, something else was bothersome.

He ran his thumb across his lower lip, trying to see what.

*Oh.* He hated to lose. So did Kira.

... and so did Yggdrassill.

“Watari?”

The old Alpha, appeared in the doorway from his own workspace. “Yes, L?”

“Start a search for any missing persons reports on male, Japanese Omegas in the last eight days. Do a separate search for female Omegas of any nationality but limited to the last twenty four hours.” L didn’t look away from the photos.

“Of course.”
L continued staring at the victims for another seven minutes. Nothing else came to mind. Perhaps tea would fix the problem… Watari would be quick, and an influx of sugar might help. There was something here, one little thing… But what?

The ninth sugar cube had just dissolved when Watari called him back to the table.

“There are three reports of missing Japanese, male Omegas in that time frame. One is an elderly Omega in Chūgoku, with prior disappearances, the second, a teen from Kyoto, involved in an ongoing mating dispute, and the last a college student, from here in Tokyo.”

“And the female Omegas?”

“The search is still running. Sixteen cases so far.”

“Adjust it to Omegas between the ages of 20 and 25, focus on Eastern Europe.”

“Will do, sir.” The older man made no move to leave.

“Something else, Watari?” L asked, not looking up to meet the Alpha’s piercing stare.

“Perhaps after I’ve adjusted the search parameters, you should bounce whatever idea is stuck in your head off of me.”

The younger Alpha’s black eyes flicked up to meet sardonic grey ones. *Hmm*… Watari was former MI6 and had been involved in the raids on Yggdrassill activities in Britain during the civil rights movement.

“I suppose that could be helpful,” the detective conceded.

The veteran smiled and went to fix the search. L tasted his tea, and immediately dropped three more sugar cubes in.
“Alright, lay it out,” Watari instructed, returning to sit at the head of the table with his laptop above the Omega’s photos. “Why am I looking for new victims?”

L bit his thumb, still stuck. “Hmm, what we know about the Omegas they’ve taken so far?”

Watari hid a chuckle behind his hand. “I’m sure you’re about to tell me.”

“I suppose I am....” L stopped hovering and perched himself on the chair centered above the headshots. “We discovered the Yggdrassills were testing XoXo on Omegas when the police raided the lab in Hong Kong. The male Omega we rescued, Kimoto Mito,” L pointed at the first photograph, “had been abducted forty three days earlier. Given that it was a Japanese Omega who had been studying in Shanghai before we found him in Hong Kong, I concluded that this was not limited to the local branch. From the records seized in the lab, we learned that there were eight independent test subjects in the study, though any other useful data had been erased by the time we got there.”

Watari nodded, “From the initial search you asked Mello and Near to run, we determined the mostly likely identities of the other seven Omegas, based on when and how Mito had been taken.”

“Correct. The boys compiled a list of sixty five names.” L stopped to consider; sixty five Omegas had gone missing in two weeks. And those were just the ones who fit the criteria of a professional kidnapping. That number was reprehensible. *Tabling that for now...*

“Twenty three hours ago, Kira contacted the police, and two of the seven remaining test subjects were rescued. Both had been identified in the list of sixty five....” L trailed off; they were getting close to the problem.

“And?”

“Both were female. Neither were Japanese. It would be logical for the Yggdrassills to test XoXo on as wide an ethnic background as possible.”

“But the fourth victim was a second Japanese, male Omega,” Watari inferred. “Why would they need two test subjects of the same background?”
“Unclear. But the Yggdrassils are highly organized. Highly methodical. These victims were not chosen at random.” The detective fell back into brooding, swirling his tea.

“Think out loud, L.”

“They’re replacing their test subjects.”

“What?!” Watari started forward in horror.

“The missing college student. I would assume that he is 22 or 23. His blood type is A+. He isn’t mated. And he likely presented Omega at the age of 12. Am I wrong?”

Watari, long since inured to L’s unfathomable logic and unbreakable monotony, even when discussing victimology, was little surprised when he pulled up the report and confirmed the detective was, per usual, correct.

L removed the spoon from his tea and stared at his reflection in the Earl Grey, as he laid out the pieces of the puzzle.

“If we ignore the fact that they seem to be targeting Japanese males and diverse females, all the victims have those five similarities: Omega, twenty to twenty five, blood type A+, unmated, abnormally early presentation. If the Yggdrassils are indeed replacing their test subjects, then we can expect two female Omegas from anywhere in the world and one male, Japanese Omega to be taken in the next few days.”

The detective set his tea aside, and prowled over to behind Watari, looking past the greying hair at the report. “How long between finding Mito and the disappearance of victim number 9?”

Watari scanned through the report. “Sora Himura. Disappeared after leaving the library, the body of his Beta was found in the dumpster. Three days after Mito was rescued.”

“So within the next seventy-two hours, three more Omegas will become XoXo incubators,” L concluded.
“We will need to inform the press.”

L shook his head. “It wouldn’t help. The Yggdrassills are professional. Are there any other similarities between victims 1 and 9?”

“Mito and Himura,” Watari corrected, “I’ll run a cross-check of their backgrounds, but based on what I’ve read so far… No.”

“Let’s assume they have no connection,” L ran his thumb over his lips. “Of the sixty five names initially identified, how many were Japanese male?”

Watari sifted to find the right list and scanned through the files. “Six.”

“And where were they abducted from?”

“Let’s see… Two from abroad... Shanghai - that was Mito - and Prague. Four from inside Japan. Kyoto, Nico, Sapporo, and… Osaka. The Kyoto case has been resolved since and the Omega from Sapporo was Hayashida, whom Kira rescued yesterday.” Watari nodded to the fourth photo.

L snarled under his breath at the reminder of the hacker, then returned to the issue at hand. “None from the Kanto region?”

“No.”

“They’re in a hurry.”

Watari frowned. “How so?”

“They kidnapped their initial subjects from as many different regions of Japan and abroad as possible to avoid detection. However, this latest abduction is in the same area as where they are gathering the rest of the Omegas. The area where we are looking the closest.”
“How would they know that we are watching Tokyo?”

“They probably don’t know that I’m here, but the NPA has been on alert for some time and we already know the Yggdrassills have a source inside the bureau. They were willing to risk taking an Omega from under the NPA’s noses because they didn’t have time to look farther.”

“So the victim they take to replace Hayashida will likely be from the Tokyo area?”

“Yes. Given the profile we have, run a search for potential targets. With their stringent requirements and the size of the city, the list shouldn’t be long.”

The older Alpha refocused on the screen and began entering search parameters. L sipped his tea, wondering if Kira had come to similar conclusions.

“The female Omegas will be more difficult,” Watari noted, without looking up. “We’ll have to notify immigration that any female Omegas entering the country should be carefully monitored. We should also alert the airports and major Omega friendly-hotels. Though they still may take their female victims from abroad.”

L nodded, but made no comment.

Watari’s search ended. “Alright. Based on the National Omega Registry data for male Omegas in Tokyo and surrounding regions that fit the profile… Seven. Though one is at school in the States.”

L reached over to steal the laptop and begin scroll through the files himself. “We’ll need to inform the NPA to issue protection details to each of…” The Alpha lost his train of thought as he saw the name on the fourth file.

“Something wrong?”

“Hmm? No. It appears that the Chief Yagami’s son matches the criteria. Anyway, as I was saying, we need to inform the NPA and get protection details out to each of these Omegas immediately.”

L returned to browsing through the files. He paused when he noticed Watari had raised an eyebrow at him.
“Yes?”

His mentor considered for long enough that L went back to reading. He glanced up when Watari started talking.

“Back during the Omega Rights Movements, I oversaw part of a raid on a Yggdrassill prostitution house outside of Colchester. There were five of agents on the strike team. Sometime afterwards, the identities of those agents were leaked in the press… In retaliation, rather than target the agents themselves, the Yggdrassills murdered their nearest blood relation. Times were different, as Britain was very nearly at the point of civil war, so the atrocity was not particularly singular, but the message was very clear.”

L raised an eyebrow.

“I mention this because Chief Yagami was reported as the arresting officer at the capture of Shishio Yggdrassill. His son likely became a target that afternoon, and, now, well…”

“I see,” L opened the file titled ‘Yagami, Light’ and was greeted with the profile picture of the Omega. Holy shit. L’s thought process stalled out. Shit, he’s hot… Oh right, Yggdrassills trying to kidnap him… L spared a single second glance for the amber eyes on the screen, then scrolled through the details. Which were just as distracting. Damn Omegas… not even here and causing distra-Tennis? Fuck! Focus… Scrolling a bit farther, the detective found links to several sealed and a few unsealed NPA cases the Omega had been involved in. Intriguing, Omega’s didn’t usually have criminal histories - oh, but they did have stalkers… He clicked on the unsealed records. But this one has helped his father on cases before too? Odd… I wonder if…

“We should get a car over to his apartment now,” Watari noted, interrupting. “I’ll call the NPA.”

L quickly located the Omega’s current address and employment data. Works from home, hmm? Shut in? (That, at least, was an unappealing detail that an international detective, who slept in different countries weekly, could latch on to.) Do you ever leave your apartment?

“Wait,” he called to Watari, “He’s got mating interviews tonight - Eastern Kanto Dynamic Relations Agency.”
The detective checked the time; the Omega would likely have left for the pre-screenings already. Those agencies were heavily guarded, as were any place where Omegas were known to congregate. *Would the Yggdrassills risk taking him from there? Unlikely…*

“Watari, I’m going to contact the chief directly.”

The older gentlemen nodded and hung up. L made the call from Watari’s laptop, too engrossed in the younger Yagami’s details to even minimize the window while he waited for the boy’s father to answer. *The Yggdrassill’s were going to take another victim, even if the NPA managed to protect all seven of the names from the search; perhaps it would be better to control the situation, if it couldn’t be prevented…*

“L?” The second window now showed the inspector’s face, looking, if possible, even more tired than this morning.

“Chief Yagami,” L addressed, still skimming Light’s data. “I have reason to believe the Yggdrassills will be targeting the families of any officers involved in the recent arrests. Please put your men on alert and have them take precautions to secure their relations.”

“What?!” The inspector had clearly not been expecting that level of bad news.

“We should also make certain that no more press releases are made in the course of this investigation.”

“Of course.”

“Also, your son matches the profile of two of the victims we have recovered so far. Add that to your involvement in the case, and I recommend that he be taken into protective custody immediately.” The older Alpha’s face paled, but L pressed on. “However, we both know that the Yggdrassills have a mole inside your precinct. The details of any protection your office issues will likely be known to the family within hours.”

The chief swallowed. “What do you suggest?”

L considered, glancing back at the profile of the Omega on the left side of his screen. “I have an associate in Japan who can provide protection the Yggdrassills will not be able to track. He’s the same Ryuzaki I dispatched to the crime scene this morning. He has my full trust. I can instruct him
to collect your son from his mating interviews tonight.”

The raven-haired Alpha ignored the raised eyebrows Watari gave him from across the table.

“Very well...” Soichiro Yagami agreed, hesitantly, “But I will need to be able to speak with my son tonight, to explain what is happening, and I will need to be able to contact him at any time until this is resolved. Is this Ryuzaki licensed?”

*Oh right, Omegas come with baggage...* “Ryuzaki is an Alpha,” L acceded, “For security purposes, we will not be able to bring Light’s current chaperone - Kite Gingsu - to the safehouse. I have another Beta I’ve worked with previously-”

L put a hand over the mic, “Watari, get Matt on a plane now,” then went back to speaking with the Chief.

“-that will be able to temporarily chaperone your son. He will on site when they arrive at the safe house. Your son will be alone in the presence of Ryuzaki for the duration of the-”

“Absolutely not!” the father of the Omega in question snapped, “I don’t even allow my son to be alone with my Alpha officers. I will not agree to this, putting Light in danger-”

“Chief Yagami,” L growled, his Alpha nature bristling at having been challenged, “This is not up for debate. I give you my assurances that Ryuzaki will not assault or molest your son in anyway.”

L paused, but quickly decided to offer a compromise, since he what he was going to do with Light once he got him was likely going to meet with even less approval than a simple tête-à-tête.

“However, I can arrange for Light to be in communication with you for the duration of transport. He will need to change phones regularly to avoid being traced, but you will have your own assurances that he is perfectly safe.”

The older Alpha was visibly upset with this situation, but L was not in the mood to care.

“We will move him to an undisclosed location for now, but you will be able to visit the safe house
at a later time, to confirm appropriateness and security of his situation. Please notify Gingsu that Light will be leaving with Ryuzaki tonight.”

The other Alpha nodded slowly.

“You should still arrange security for the rest of your family,” the younger Alpha continued, reminding the man that there were other problems at hand. “There are five other Omegas in the Kanto area that match the victim profile. They will need security details, preferably from men you trust. I am sending you their names.”

Chief Inspector Yagami looked close to fainting with the magnitude of shit the world’s greatest detective had just dropped on him. But, he hadn’t become a leader in the NPA without a significant measure of grit.

“I will see it done,” he growled, resolving any doubt L might have about his holding up under pressure. “And my son had better not be marked in anyway when I see him next. I expect to hear from him tonight.”

“Very well, Ryuzaki will contact you when Light is secure.”

L ended the call.

“Watari, please prepare guest suites. Then call ahead to the agency to get Ryuzaki an interview with the Yagami boy.”

The older Alpha was wise enough not to argue.

L stood and went to grab shoes (ugh); he’d never bothered with mating interviews before, never having been even remotely interested. They weren’t mandatory for Alphas like they were for Omegas, though any unmated Alpha not regularly attending them had to prove he wasn’t hunting Omegas on the side. Usually the detective classified Omegas as useless, annoying distractions. Same classification he gave Betas and Alphas. But an interview with Light Yagami was exactly what he needed right now, just not for mating purposes.

The Yggdrassils were going to hunt one of these six Omegas. Kira seemed to be coming at the
them from their papertrail, spooking the criminals into a panic; rather than join the chase, possibly causing them to scatter, L would let the vigilante run them into the net he’d have waiting. And if Kira wasn’t careful, he’d find himself caught in that same net.

Light Yagami had a curious file; L was interested to know if the gorgeous brunette was as deep of a mystery as he seemed.

But mostly, he wanted to see if the young Omega could be convinced to act as bait...

Chapter End Notes

I am deeply honored by the massive show of support for the last chapter.

With that said, I am prepared for you all to beat me over the head for delaying L and Light's meeting by one more chapter. But L figured something out! This is what!

If you forgive me for delaying the vigilante and the detective their meet cute, I promise not to leave ya'll hanging.

ALSO! Totally wanted to add this! I did the math!!!!!

In my dystopian world, I figured the populations would be slightly lower since Beta and Alpha females have lower pregnancy rates that wouldn't be overcome by the ability of male Omegas to give birth. Therefore:

Population of Japan => 115.2 million
Population of Tokyo => 13.2 million
Omegas (12% of population) =>
Male Omegas (35% of all Omegas) =>
Japanese with A+ blood (39.8%) =>
Between ages of 20 - 25 (4.9%) =>
Unmated, in that age group (15%) =>
Presented early (0.4%) => 7 targets

The number of victims is not made up. Math said so!
Chapter Summary

The first four mating interviews... And Light thought the fifth one would be problematic.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Over the last two decades, the Japanese mating interview has evolved into an intricate affair. So much so that official publications on etiquette are mass produced and updated annually. Every nuance has become steeped in tradition and implication, designed to show respect to the Omega.

To initiate, a Beta representative will make formal introductions. But then the Alpha and Omega are left to each other’s company for half an hour, usually seated across from each other at a low tea table. The interview begins with a selection of refreshment by the Omega. This sets the tone for the rest of the meeting, as it is the first indication the Omega gives the Alpha of his or her mood: tea is considered intimate and meant to be shared, alcohol indicates the Omega is not comfortable, and the Alpha should follow the most formal lines of behavior. And of course, the type of tea or liquor has its own meaning.

Conversation is expected and can be initiated by either party.

Unfortunately, Alpha-Omega interactions are driven by much more than words. Body language can be monitored by camera; scent can not. If an Omega ever senses that an Alpha is trying to force them to submit, either by tone or pheromones, they are required to signal to their rep, who observes all the interviews from afar. These particular signals are not published in any book and are chosen by each Omega. There are three degrees of severity: an accidental slip by the Alpha, a warning, and an SOS. The first can be excused thrice; if the second is given, the meeting continues, but the Alpha is flagged and will not be invited to return unless requested by the Omega; and the third halts the interview immediately.

As the night progresses, if the Omega becomes interested, he or she is expected to give both the Alpha and surveillance an idea of it. A quarter turn of a drink cup indicates all was well; a half turn, all was very well. A fold of the hands, right over left, indicates the Omega was interested in seeing the Alpha again. Physical contact was stringently frowned upon, though a few exceptions, such as palm reading, had been imported by foreign Alphas over time.

All this, in addition to the verbal discourse had during the meeting, and the written reviews, given
to the rep afterwards.

Notably, there was no way for an Omega to signal that they simply did not like the Alpha. It would be impossible to keep those signals secret from the public, and the Omega would likely anger an Alpha by using them.

Such as it was, on a usual Thursday night, Light resigned himself to five martini’s (six if there was a particularly trying Alpha in his docket), and sitting stock still for five half hours.

“... and we could go skiing in the Alps for Christmas! Your file says you speak French so you could be my translator!”

Light sipped his martini, going through the drink far too quickly. Misa took that as a ‘yes, dear’ and continued painting a picture of their fantasy life together.

“... ooh and I could buy you the most adorable earmuffs. You’d look so good in earmuffs. Of course you look good all the time anyway. We’d have the most beautiful children together…”

Light tried not to choke on his olive. Never gonna happen, Misa. But his brain did the calculations anyway: If their children got his intelligence and her looks, it would be pretty okay. If it was the other way around, well, at least they’d be pretty… Ugh, why was he even hypothesizing this?

Oh right, because he was stuck in a room with Misa Amane until time ran out.

This was their fifth interview together. The blonde Alpha had come into his life when he was shopping at a home decor boutique, of all things. (Not even the fact that it was cashmere, could absolve the blanket he’d bought that day for bringing this creature into his life.) Misa had seen him and immediately sprinted up to Kite. Despite her hyperness, she had asked the appropriate questions. May I introduce myself to your Omega? Are you mated? Which mating agency do you use? May I apply to see you? Kite had guilted him into being truthful and agreeing: That’s Misa Amane! The super-model! Do it and get me an autograph!

Light was still pissed at his Beta for that one.
“... and then we could have dinner with your family every once in awhile. Oh I wouldn’t dare keep you from them, you could visit as often as you like, and I could come with you…”

The Omega signalled for a refill on his martini. (The Beta servers could have been ghosts, so invisibly efficient they were.) It was probably not the best idea to be drinking tonight, considering who his final interview was with. But if Light had to put up with anymore of Misa Misa while sober, he was going to be arrested for murder long before Shintaro got to him. (Plus, the alcohol was having an additive effect with the aspirin; he could almost not feel his ribs.)

“... and then we could cuddle up and watch scary movies; I could hold if you got scared ... “

Like always, Misa’s dull rant left Light’s mind time to wander. He’d recently started comparing the differences between the Alphas he met on Thursday nights and the ones he met every other day of the week. In the real world, they were so normal; Light had joked with Victor about bowling nights just yesterday. Why did they turn into condescending idiots the minute they saw an Omega? Was it psychological, or physiological?

Of course, Light was pretty sure Misa was like this all the time.

“... Oh and I could introduce you to my manager! He’s a real stick in the mud, but I know he’d love you. He’s been telling me for ages I should find a nice Omega and then I told him about you and he got all excited and started calling all the magazines and securing exclusive covers for us together…”

Light forced himself to pace the second martini.

Towards the end, he became almost glad there was an assassin waiting for him four sessions from now. If Shintaro killed him, at least he’d never have to listen to Misa Amante tell him how sexy he’d look in an apron again.

A soft bell chimed.

“Miss Amante, Mr. Yagami. I’m afraid this concludes your session for the evening,” a polite Beta enforcer said, bowing from the door.
“Oh no! I had so much more I wanted to talk to Light about,” the Alpha pouted.

The very-much annoyed Omega inclined his head, “I’m certain you’ll apply to see me again.” (He’d just doubled the number of words he’d spoken to her tonight.)

“Oh of course! I’ll see you next week Light! Unless you want to meet up sooner! You have my number!” Misa called over her shoulder, as the Beta politely shooed her out the door.

Light rubbed his temples. Rem! Do you and those bastards watching up there see how painful this is?

He rolled his shoulders and stretched his muscles legs, so he wouldn’t have to fight a cramp during the next interview. His ribs protested quietly.

Five minute until the next, and then four more…

Shintaro’s primary method of killing was single gunshot wound to the head. She wouldn’t be able to get a gun past security, would she? No… Metal detectors…

“Mr. Yagami? Are you ready for your next interview?”

“I’d like six children; based on your genetic profile, you are likely to bear multiple sets of twins. Of course during your heat, you’d be taking fertility enhancers to help ensure the likelihood of a multiple fertilization events. They told me you had broken ribs recently, it was of some concern, but modern medicine is good enough that you’ll only have to be under bedrest for the durations of your pregnancies. How soon is your next heat?”

“Martini, please.”
They could bribe a security guard to look the other way... Bribe the surveillance guys? ... No, Rem was up there. Light was quite certain that bitch could never be bought. (He’d tried it himself through various aliases, when he found out who was going to be responsible for choosing his future prospects.)

... Poison?

“Mr. Yagami?”

“I’m sorry, I’ve just never seen an Omega this close before. There weren’t any in my school and you really only see them from a distance at the market... You’re really beautiful.”

“Thank you.”

“I’m sorry, I’m probably babbling like an idiot...“

_Huh? An Alpha apologizing for something? _“That’s okay. These interviews are for us to talk. Why don’t you tell me about yourself?”_

“Um, well, I’m sure it told you in my file that I’ve been married before. To another Alpha... It didn’t end up working, because we both wanted kids but neither of us could get pregnant. Not that I’m saying I just want an Omega to get pregnant. Well I mean I do, but... ”

_And we’re back..._

_Kite was going to be in the room. He was trained, there were cameras, Fuck. Keep it together. What kind of idiot sits and waits for the hit man to come to him? Fuck, fuck, fuck._
Oh get a grip, Yagami. You have half an hour with the Yggdrassill hitman. Use this opportunity to get something useful out of her.

The Beta rapped on the door.

“Mr. Yagami, may I introduce R. Ryuzaki? Mr. Ryuzaki, may I present Light Yagami.”

Light stood to greet the next Alpha he’d be shutting down. The previous two, he’d civilly thanked for their time, but informed them that he was not interested in seeing them again. (He’d have done the same with Amane, but he’d tried that the first four times, and she kept coming back.)

He had half an hour before Koko Shintaro walked through that door. And Light was having trouble focussing on anything else. Don’t consume anything, keep a safe distance, don’t provoke her. His ribs had taken to throbbing in time with his thoughts, reminding him that he had an even greater physical disadvantage than usual.

Kite. Kite would be there. All companions were issued an emergency taser, but Kite was fully licensed to carry a concealed weapon, so if things went really south, at least Light would have an ally nearby.

The probability of her being here to actually hurt him was very low. But not zero. Stay calm and use it to your advantage...

Now he just had to get through… Huh?

Light’s fourth interview walked towards him.

Again, huh?

The Alpha wore a loose, long-sleeved, white t-shirt and baggy, heather slacks, that had Light at a loss. Usually Alphas dressed to impress the Omegas. Apparently, this guy subscribed to a different
school of thought. Nor had he bothered to comb his mane of jet-black hair.

The Alpha approached, slouching with his hands in his pockets. “Hello, Light Yagami. I am Ryuzaki,” The man’s voice was deep and inflectionless sending shivers down his spine. The Omega briefly wondered if he was trying to use his Alpha voice on him and balked.

Asshole! While it’s usually not the time for that shit, now is REALLY not the time the time for that shit. Assassin. En route... Don’t mess with me.

Ryuzaki didn’t seem phased by the polite hostility emanating from the brunette Omega, and extended a hand in greeting. The Omega caught the faint scent of apples and coffee clinging to the man’s clothes. Light reluctantly returned the grip, starting to speculate if this was some kind of a joke on Rem’s part. When he released the Alpha’s warm hand, Ryuzaki immediately crouched down in the oddest fashion Light had ever seen an adult sit.

Ryuzaki, it seemed, didn’t care that the Omega hadn’t moved first. Given his already high tension level, Light was beyond annoyed. While usually Light found the interview customs ridiculous, this behavior would be disrespectful in any setting.

The Omega slowly took his seat.

He stared down the Alpha, refusing to open the ceremony, essentially daring Ryuzaki to comment. It was generally not a good idea to show aggression like this, but Light didn’t care. He was saving all his composure for Shintaro; Ryuzaki could go to hell.

The Alpha’s eyes, the darkest the brunette had ever seen, watched him carefully. Light contemplated if the man was on drugs, his pupils being just so dilated that the irises were missing. But no, even though the brunette was discontent as hell, Light recognized the intelligence in those black depths... Judging by those circles, you don’t get much sleep, do you Ryuzaki?

The Alpha clearly didn’t care about making a good impression on the Omega, meeting Light’s stare with a deceptively disinterested one of his own. But, they were stuck with each other for half an hour, and Light could either talk to Ryuzaki or agonize over Shintaro. The Omega broke the silence.

“So, Ryuzaki. Why do you think my representative selected you, for me to meet?”
“I would assume because I asked her to.” His voice was still just as deep and monotonous. Light’s eyes narrowed. All Alpha candidates applied through the Beta representatives, but Ryuzaki’s tone implied something more.

“And do you always get what you ask for?”

“Usually.” Typical Alpha.

“Then why did you wish to meet me?” Light almost hissed. *Clearly not to court me like a decent human being.* He caught another whiff of coffee as the Alpha reached up to ruffle his wild black hair.

“I believe you are going to need my assistance. I am curious to know if you would be willing to assist me in exchange.”

“And what do you believe I will need your assistance with?”

Light half-expected a ‘to fuck your heat away’; it wouldn’t be the first time an Alpha had attempted the shockingly vulgar approach to seduction. Coffee scent and deep voice aside, the Omega was about as far from willing to be seduced as it was possible to be. He was ready to take whatever Ryuzaki’s answer was and shove it down his throat.

“I believe that Yggdrasil family intends to abduct you within the next seventy-two hours. I am working in collaboration with your father and the NPA to prevent such an occurrence.”

Or not.

To his credit, Light’s jaw didn’t drop.

*What the… how did he… what does that… who is… huh… how does… what…?* In addition to the unanswerable stream of unfinished questions zinging through his brain there was a single additional thought Light processed: *Fuck.*
His brain might have froze, but his poise was impeccable. Detective Ryuzaki’s sharp eyes watched him carefully, noticing how the Omega was reacting. Light did some quick calculations of how he *should* be reacting: if he wasn’t Kira, he should be shocked, suspicious, scared. All in moderation of course. (Surprisingly not far from what he was actually feeling, albeit with a bit more informed cause: Shintaro.)

“And why would the Yggdrassills want to abduct me?” he asked, slowly and carefully.

With the ball back in Ryuzaki’s court, the Omega’s mind kicked into overdrive; *had he fucked up that badly at the pier, that both the NPA and Yggdrassills knew who he was? No, Ryuzaki would be arresting him then…* Light was so tied up in his own thoughts that he almost missed Ryuzaki’s next words.

“Because you fit a victim profile that they have been targeting. That and your father recently arrested the head of their Japanese branch.”

From the Alpha’s tone, completely matter-of-fact, no one would ever suspect he had just announced Light was a target of the organized crime syndicate. But Light was more than a little stuck on the fact that none of this had to do with his alternate identity.

_Seriously? The NPA and the Yggdrassills are both here JUST because I’m a freaking Omega? No one cares about the fact that I’m Kira? Really people? Or was Ryuzaki looking for him to slip up and reveal something…_

“I should also tell you that, for security purposes, I’ve had the surveillance system for this room taken off line for this conversation.”

The possibility of Ryuzaki trying to make a move on him was so far gone from Light’s mind, that he didn’t spare a second thought for the fact that he was alone and unsecured with the Alpha.

His mind was flying through the memories of the Omega he had pulled out of the container. He’d been about the same age as Light, but other than that and both being Japanese, he hadn’t seen much of a similarity. But maybe being a Japanese Omega with a law enforcing father was enough. *This was exactly why he should not have slept all day*…

He swallowed.
“And how are you going to prevent one of the most powerful international criminal organizations in the world from getting to me?”

Shintaro was likely already in the building. But if the NPA was here, then his worries were null. Unless Ryuzaki was lying about his identity. Possible...

The Alpha ran his thumb over his lips. “We will start with protective custody. You will leave here tonight with me; I have already arranged with both your chaperone and your father for you to be transported to a secure location. From there, we’ll see how persistently the Yggdrassills look for you. Depending on their actions, I may ask for your assistance in catching them.”

Light almost laughed. The NPA was seeking the help of an Omega? Right. Whenever an Omega became involved in a criminal investigation, they bundled him up in itchy blankets and set him aside with hot chocolate, saying ‘don’t worry, we’ll handle it’. Light knew. Ryuzaki didn’t want a consultant; he wanted a hot-piece-of-Omega-ass to dangle about.

“You’re lying. You are asking me for permission to let you use me to draw them out, and then either pinch their thugs, or, if their abduction is successful, use me to lead you to their base of operations.”

The Alpha’s eyes widened, and Light smirked. Yeah, Omegas can think. Surprise.

But if the NPA was asking him to partake in a sting operation, then they clearly had no clue that he was Kira. Though the odds of Kira, a.k.a. Light Yagami, just happening to match the Yggdrassill’s current victim profile were incredibly low. Although, hell, every scenario Light ran through to explain what was happening right now was coming up as statistically impossible.

He narrowed it down to three most likely improbabilities:

One: Ryuzaki was telling the truth, didn’t know he was Kira, and had somehow cleared this with his father. Light knew of exactly zero cases where the authorities purposely put an Omega in an at-risk situation, so this would be one hell of a first.

Two: The NPA was willing to risk it because they suspected he was Kira? Some kind of he’s-a-criminal-so-he’s-sacrificeable-so-let’s-use-him-before-we-send-him-to-jail thing? And see if we
can get any evidence on him while we’re at it?

*Three:* Ryuzaki wasn’t who he said he was. That would mean, for him to know what he did, the Alpha was part of the Yggdrassill organization and tonight was some kind of good-hitman, bad-hitman set up.

All potentially lethal options. Light refocussed on Ryuzaki, who hadn’t spoken yet.

“Am I wrong?”

The Alpha smiled, dark eyes piercing the Omega across the table. “No, you are quite correct. Your file indicated you were intelligent. I see it did not lie.”

“I’m glad my paperwork is in order. Now tell me why I should agree to this.”

Light folded his arms, something Omegas were strongly advised against, as Alphas saw it as a challenge and instinctively reacted to make them submit. But the brunette needed to test this ‘detective’. An NPA officer would be annoyed; a Yggdrassill, with an Alpha superiority complex, would be livid. Light needed to know who he was dealing with here.

Ryuzaki didn’t react other than to tilt his head a bit.

“Because the Yggdrassills are producing a drug that needs to be destroyed before it hits open markets. From your file, I can tell that you have decent deductive reasoning skills, you are athletic, and, oddly enough for an Omega, you have proven you can handle yourself in dangerous situations.”

Light flinched at the allusion, but Ryuzaki kept talking.

“The Yggdrassills have a very clear profile for their targets. You fit it. In cases where criminals are looking to abduct a specific type of person, law enforcement agencies will often send agents who match that profile in as honeypots. The Yggdrassills *will* take another innocent, regardless of how hard the NPA tries to prevent it. There are no Omega agents within the NPA who fit the profile. There are no active Omega agents, period. You have have minor experience working on your father’s cases. Of all the Omegas who they could attempt to take, you have the best chance of
surviving, while helping bring them to justice.”

The brunette was surprised by the passion in the man’s voice with those last few words, and he found himself believing Ryuzaki truly meant what he was saying. That didn’t change the fact that the man had just admitted he wanted to put Light in a situation where there was only a *chance* that he’d come out alive.

Being kidnapped by an organization like the Yggdrassills was most Omegas’ worst nightmare. But Ryuzaki was right; the Yggdrassills needed to be stopped. It was stupidly crazy. But then again, hadn’t Kira launched a single-man assault on the Yggdrassills not twenty four hours ago?

*Wait, was he actually considering this?* He needed to confirm that Ryuzaki really was working for the NPA first. But, if he was… Light might be able to use this to infiltrate the organization, with the safety net of the NPA, to boot. (Even if Light didn’t fully trust them.) But an Omega who wasn’t Kira would say:

“And my father agreed to this?”

The Alpha ran his thumb across his lips, again. The habit was starting to bug Light as it kept drawing his attention to the man’s mouth.

“Well, I have only run the protective custody part by him so far. I decided to see if you would be agreeable before dealing with Chief Yagami’s yelling-”

Light smirked. *Oh you know he’s going to kill you for this, right?*

“-However, much of this is still in flux and entirely dependent on Yggdrassill’s actions. We can discuss the details and risks further at the safehouse. Oh, the protective custody is non-negotiable, by the way.”

Light frowned. He didn’t like that he was essentially being kidnapped by legal means before he could be kidnapped by illegal ones. But Kira had been chipping away at the Yggdrassills for months now. He paused as he considered what he wasn’t supposed to know. Five boxes had arrived in Tokyo in the last forty eight hours… Ryuzaki was telling him they contained Omegas; he’d seen that they contained Omegas. *He’d only gotten to three of them*...
Light looked back at the black eyes burning into him.

“And why should I trust you?”

Ryuzaki considered the question, letting his hands fall to his knees, so he could lean towards the Omega minutely.

“Because Light, I am L.”

Chapter End Notes

So Light and L meet at last.

Not that Misa didn't try to get in the way, per usual.

This was a big scene to write, and I hope I did it justice. Since what I'm trying to convey and what's coming across aren't always the same thing, how do you guys think Light feels about L right now?

Also, why did L tell Light his real identity? Next chapter. Though it's less of a big deal than I'm making seem.
To Mix a Mocha

Chapter Summary

L finds what he's looking for, and Light has to lie his ass off.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

L studied the Omega’s reaction carefully. He barely even flinched. Interesting… But that slight widening of the eyes was ever so telling.

The detective hadn’t planned on revealing his identity, or even trying to convince the Omega to assist with the case yet, but Light Yagami was… not what he’d expected. That initial aggression had been so palpable, so targeted, it had sparked L’s competitiveness. And then they Omega launched a verbal tennis match, forcing L return each stroke just as fiercely. Aren’t Omegas supposed to be coy, Light? Or is all that directness a misdirection in and of itself? Whatever could you be hiding behind it? Regardless, he needed the Omega to trust him, and Light Yagami had proven too intelligent not to be suspicious of a random NPA associate.

Quite simply, L was asking the Omega to risk his life; revealing his identity proved that he was willing to do the same.

“You’re claiming to be L? The L? As in the world’s greatest detective?” the brunette asked, skeptically.

No, no you don’t trust me at all, do you?

“Yes. I am that L.”

The Omega huffed, shaking his head. The motion stirred the cocoa scent in the air, and L unconsciously licked his lips.

That was another problem.
This brunette Omega was more attractive than anyone had any right to be. (The man smelled like chocolate for god’s sake. There should have been biohazard warning labels all over his file.) L had known that he would be racing biology on this one; he needed to get Light to consent and put a plan in motion, before his natural Alpha instincts kicked in and refused to let him endanger the Omega.

*And before the Yggdrassils got their claws on another victim.*

“Well that explains why Rem put you on my schedule... “ Light muttered, almost to himself. The Omega’s amber eyes flashed up to pin him down. “And my father will confirm your identity?”

“Your father is working with me, L, in this investigation. He believes that my, L’s, associate Ryuzaki will be handling matters on the ground here in Japan, including transporting you to a secure location this evening.”

“Hmm, so if I were to text him now, asking about Ryuzaki, would you try and stop me?”

L frowned, more than a little bothered that the man thought him capable of that. Also, that the Omega was deliberately, but carefully challenging him. *Another Alpha would have submitted you by now. Are you purposely seeing how far you can push me?* Pushing the obnoxious Alpha instincts aside, he realized it was wise of Light to be cautious.

“No, in fact please do. If you have doubts about my identity, it would be best to get them out of the way now. Though I would request that you refrain from revealing that L and Ryuzaki are the same person.”

The Omega nodded and pulled out his phone. He typed quickly and pressed send. He then set the phone down on the table, spinning it so that L could see the message he’d sent:

Me 08:42: What’s going on?

*Smart question...* There had to be three possible scenarios playing in Light’s mind right now: the Alpha was in fact L, the Alpha was lying for sport, the Alpha was lying with purpose. That’s what he would think, if he were in Light’s position. As vague as the question was, Soichiro Yagami’s response would have to be well informed to prove the detective was not an imposter. *Really smart question.*
They both sat there, staring at the phone, waiting for an answer. L noticed how Light’s brunette hair fell into his face, hiding his eyes and thus any emotions that might be playing out there.

Father 08:43: Ryuzaki is there to protect you, Light
Father 08:43: Is he there?

Light pulled the phone back towards himself.

Me 08:44: Yes, I’ll call when the interviews are over

The Omega looked up. “You are who you say you are.”

L frowned. Yes, he was who he said he was, but he could have been someone else who had merely gotten ahold of Soichiro Yagami’s phone. The Omega noticed his disapproval and smirked.

“‘Comma Light’. Only my father could have sent those messages. I suppose we’ll have to think of a new challenge/response now.”

The Alpha reverted to his earlier assessment. Smart…

“That saves us time then.”

The Omega nodded slowly, folding his hands on the table, and no longer meeting L’s gaze. What are you thinking, Light? The detective’s sharp eyes noticed a slight shift in posture, like the Omega was curling into himself.

“Is there any chance the Yggdrassils would try to get to me here?” Light asked, hesitantly, “I mean Omegas are required to be at these things. They could know my schedule…”

He sounded more worried than before. L caught the faintest hint of distressed pheromones emanating from the brunette. He fought back a growl. This was why he didn’t like working with people; they got scared. Unless they were Kira, breaking into a highly secure mob drop site to
rescue blitzed out Omegas by the skin of their teeth. Him, L might have considered working with… Assuming they could come to an agreement on the legality of their activities… Grrr, focus.

Vigilante later, bait now…

The detective kept his annoyance with the Omega in check, recognizing that being afraid the Yggdrassills was a perfectly healthy response. But… hmm... It niggled at him. Just a little bit, but L identified what had irked him: Light hadn’t shown even a hint of fear until right now…

“The security at these mating agencies is designed to prevent exactly that,” L pointed out, reasonably, “The Yggdrassills would most likely send someone for you at your apartment, particularly since you live alone and work from home during the day when the complex is mostly empty. But it is not inconceivable that they might send someone here.”

The Omega bit his lip.

“It’s just that Rem had to scramble my schedule tonight. I’m guessing that’s partly because of you, but I only recognized one of the names of the Alphas I was supposed to meet with.”

L sighed, not liking the idea of going through his Omega’s list of suitors. Hold up. Immediate mental correction: his BAIT’s list of suitors. The Omega’s pheromones were becoming rather tiresome and L really just wanted to think. Anyway … the Yggdrassills survived by doing the unexpected. It would be best to check.

“I suppose we could run the names. Though I doubt we’ll find anything. You’ve met with three Alphas already?” L wasn’t sure why it mattered, but it did.

“Yes. Misa Amane-”

“The supermodel?” L interjected, impressed. She was gorgeous, even if she was an Alpha. The two of you would have beautiful children… He noticed the Omega glaring at him. Careful, Light. Aren’t you supposed to be afraid right now?

“She has interviewed with me regularly for a while now…” Light admitted, but then hesitated,
“The others were new.”

*Right, you’re suddenly paranoid about these other Alphas. I agree they could be problematic, but why do YOU think this? And L still wasn’t particularly interested in having to hear about who was courting his bait. “What are their names?”*

“Um,... Teiji Yokoyama, Raku Nakanoi, R. Ryuzaki, also known as L, apparently,” Light paused to make a face, “and Koko Shintaro.”

*Maybe not so paranoid...* L’s eyes widened. “Koko Shintaro?”

“Yes? Do you know her?”

*Indeed, she’s killed more law enforcement agents than anyone else I know. Except one... If the Yggdrassills had sent her here, this Omega was certainly their next target.*

It suddenly clicked.

Light had already recognized Shintaro’s name; the Omega’s father was the police chief, there were any number of ways he could have heard about ‘The Secretary’. So the brunette was testing him again, to see if the detective recognized the name and, if he did, to find out if L actually was here to help. *Still don’t trust me, do you?*

The detective ran through the options. He was here alone (though he did have an army of mating personnel on call). *Not useful...* Light could be in very real danger if the woman had a plan. His eyes flicked back to the Omega. They’d only recovered Haru Hayashida eighteen hours ago, this was drastic escalation. *Perhaps they’re running out of time?*

*Unimportant right now.* Options: She’s here to kill Soichiro Yagami’s son. *Unlikely.* She’s here to kidnap a new test subject. *Possible.* She’s here to reconnoiter the above options: *Probable.* She’s here to court an Omega. *Impossible.*

*The Yggdrassills didn’t court; they took. Good to know he had bait worth taking.*
But the detective had no preparations in case of the first two possibilities, however unlikely. It could be a missed opportunity, but it was too dangerous without backup or having fully briefed Light on his role.

“She works for Shishio Yggdrassill. It appears they decided to move on you tonight. Without backup and no time to prep you for that kind of encounter, we need get you out of here. Now.”

The Alpha stood and held out a hand for the Omega.

The brunette didn’t take it. Instead he gracefully folded his hands on his lap and thoughtfully regarded the table in front of him.

“I thought the entire point was to have me do exactly this. She’s not going to be able to abduct me from this table. Especially not with you watching.” Light’s eyes flicked up to meet the detective’s. “Shouldn’t I meet with her and find out what I can?”

L growled, startling the Omega, who had clearly forgotten that there was an Alpha in the room. But the younger male didn’t back down. Interesting… Light, you sounded so scared a moment ago, and now you want to interview with an assassin? You’re being highly inconsistent… But that doesn’t change Shintaro having the advantage over us right now.

However, the younger man kept talking.

“Turn the cameras back on. Watch and listen in. My Beta can be in the room. I’ll do the normal mating-interview flirting thing and see if I can get her to reveal anything about why she’s here. If she works for Shishio Yggdrassill himself, then she’s probably very good at what she does, but I’m supposed to be an Omega looking for a mate. If I pretend to be attracted to her, I might be able to get her to agree to meet with me in the next few days, which would be a much better option than letting them choose when and how they come after me.”

The detective felt his jaw drop. Who was this kid? Not even an hour ago he’d been oscillating between methods of convincing the young Omega to risk his life to catch the Yggdrassills, and, now, here he was, volunteering putting his head on the chopping block. With an actually decent, if crazily dangerous, idea...

The brunette didn’t wait for him to agree; Light fluidly stood and walked to the door to hold it open for the Alpha. L ran his thumb over his lips, weighing the pros and cons of letting Light do
this. All things considered, this was the most controlled environment they could ask for, in a confrontation with the family.

“There’s twelve minutes until my next interview starts. If you’re really L, then I’m sure that’s plenty of time for you to get into position,” the brunette said, sweetly. The Alpha grinned. *You just love throwing challenges at me, don’t you Light Yagami? Because you know I’ll rise to them? Or because you like to play?*

The detective moved to cross through the doorway, where the Omega waited.

As he passed, hiding his shudder at the Omega’s intoxicating scent, he heard Light quietly murmur behind his back, “If you’re lying to me or not as good as you say you are, then in my next life, I promise I will find and kill you.”

*Oh no little Yagami, no one gets the last word on me like that.* L smirked over his shoulder.

“I am sure you would. But I am L and I am that good. Just don’t get yourself killed in the next half hour and I will prove it to you.”

Light slammed the door shut, contemplating putting his fist through it, and if his ribs hadn’t taken precedence, he might have.

*L?*

This wasn’t the worst case scenario for an undercover vigilante, but it was pretty damn close. Fortunately, the Omega had developed his plan on how to deal with the hitman during the first three interviews. (Not that he’d had any chance to refine it, like he’d planned on doing, during the fourth.) And now he had to put on a show for two different, uninvited guests. Light hated the cliché, but he was just going to have to go with nervous and shy, and hope being an Omega covered any slips.

*And what the fuck was L himself doing here?*
Light knew he’d made some slips during the interview; he hadn’t had time to be smoother with his tip off on the hitman, and L was likely questioning why he’d pretended to be scared. *Well joke’s on you, detective, because I am scared.* And he hated it. But if the detective did catch that mistake, and Light knew he would, he should be able to pass it off as a name that filtered down to him through his father.

But now Kira had the world’s greatest detective watching his back. The Alpha had pressed every button he had, but there was something comforting about not being the only one who knew what was going on.

He glanced pulled out his phone to check the time. His official interview with R. Ryuzaki had just ended.

Five minutes.

There was a knock on the door. He opened it and Kite soldiered in.

“I take it this has something to do with the call I got from your father?” The Beta glared at the brunette like the Omega had known trouble was amok in paradise all along.

*Well… Technically he had…*

Light played dumb, trying to sound unsure. “I don’t know. The last interview, Ryuzaki, said he was working with my father on a case and something about me maybe being a target.” *Oh not just ‘maybe’, most definitely*. But Kite didn’t need to know that.

The Beta was ex-military and had exactly zero tolerance for threats against his charges. “Is this next interview part of this? You’ve never asked me to sit in on one before.”

Again Light fudged the truth, trying to play it off as just a suspicious happenstance and not what it was. “I’m not sure. It could just be a coincidence, but Ryuzaki said she could have ties to the people my father’s investigating. If it was really bad they wouldn’t be letting me meet with her. They’re just being careful.”

Kite gave him a withering look. “Light, you don’t have to interview with her-”
“He’s right Light,” Rem snapped, storming into the room. “I just spent the last half hour yelling at the NPA, trying to find out why the hell they allowed you to be alone and unobserved with one of their Alphas for a full twenty-three minutes. And then that bastard of theirs comes up to tell me he’s letting me put my security system back online and that he’s sitting in to observe your next interview. Law enforcement or not, I cannot let an Alpha stalk one of my Omegas like this. We can reschedule this next interview, but right now, we need to get you away from Ryuzaki. Whatever he said to you, you are under no obligation to submit to him, you know that right?”

Oh jesus, this was not… Really? Light kept his practice Beta growl under wraps, though he would dearly love to scare the shit out of his rep with it right now. This is NOT the problem we need to be worrying about.

“Rem, he didn’t try to dominate me. He just asked for my help in a case.” Light tried to sound pacifying, but firm, clearly demonstrating he was acting of his own free will.

Unfortunately, the rep was seasoned enough to have seen her fair share of abusive relationships and the kind of pull an Alpha could put over an Omega in the wrong circumstances.

“Light, you don’t have to obey him and you don’t have cover for him. It’s okay...”

Light could tell that she was about two seconds away from dragging him out the door and throwing him into Alpha Detox. Also known as parent’s basement. (Had he been any other Omega dealing with any other Alpha, Light would have been disappointed if she didn’t.)

“Rem! I’m fine-” well no, but it’s the assassin not the… Oh fuck it, it doesn’t matter… “-I know this is highly irregular-” fantastic summation, Yagami “-but it could help my father’s investigation-” and Kira’s… “Call him and he’ll tell you that Ryuzaki is just here to protect me-” not that he knows who Ryuzaki even is… “-it’s okay.”

Neither Rem or Kite looked convinced, glancing at each other like the Omega wasn’t right there, and Light lost his temper. The two Betas were wasting time; he needed to get them under control now.
“Both of you, seriously! Calm the fuck down!” He turned to the male bodyguard, addressing that fire first. “Kite, this is something I need to do as a responsible citizen of Japan. It’s likely not even be related to the NPA’s case.” He glanced over to Rem, tackling her issue. “You said yourself she cleared the background check; the NPA just wants to make absolutely sure.” He faced Kite. “They wouldn’t have even suggested it if they thought she was an actual threat.” Back to Rem. “Ryuzaki’s a paranoid piece of work, but he’s not stalking me.” And finally confronting them both. “I. Am. Fine.”

The twenty three year old was justifiably proud of his lying prowess right there at the end. He’d almost convinced himself. Almost.

He wondered if the coffee scented Alpha was already watching. The Omega had a brief out of body experience as he realized he might have just called L, the world’s greatest detective, a paranoid piece of work, right to his face. Oh, I really hope he caught that...

Rem studied him for a good minute, one of the precious few he had left before he to have his act together. Light caught her checking his neck to make sure there were no marks and he forced himself not to roll his eyes. Come on, just leave before she gets here or she’ll know something is wrong...

“Okay Light,” she growled, “I’ll trust you this one time. But Ryuzaki is an Alpha; detective or not, he could easily form an inappropriate attachment to you. You have rights.”

Oh for the love of god Rem. The entire purpose of these meetings if for inappropriate attachments to form . She thundered back through the door before Light had a chance to defend the Alpha again. Wait, how in the hell had he gotten into a position of defending an Alpha anyway? Oh right, world’s greatest asshole decides to crash the party and all goes to hell… The Omega shook his head; too much was happening, too fast… Kira’d just have to work faster.

“It is possible for an Alpha and Omega to have a professional conversation without sexual undertones,” Light snapped at Kite.

His Beta pursed his lips and rolled his eyes, backing up against the wall. “You’re supposed to be my easy charge, you know. I’ll be right here. Remember those signals I had you practice.”

“I’m your only charge,” Light muttered, “And I know. Kite, this is all just overkill anyways. It’ll be fine.”
And with that, Light, settled into a formal kneeling position, really hoping that wasn’t the last lie he’d tell his Beta.

Chapter End Notes

L likes chocolate. It's a fair character trait and I defy anyone to not like an Omega Light who smells like that heavenly substance.

Thank you again, everyone who's been reading. I do hope the background plot isn’t getting too distracting from the vigilante/detective relationship that’s supposed to be developing.

Also, since I'm me, I'll probably have to throw an action scene in here sometime in the near future, so hopefully I keep you all on your toes!
Chapter Summary

The long awaited, fifth interview. In which Light's martini is forgone. Again.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

She was tall, even for an Alpha. Long black hair, exotic features. A knowing smile that sent tinges down a spine. Without any prior knowledge of who walked towards him, the Omega knew he would have stopped to talk with her on the street. He would have fallen for it.

And that pissed him off.

Light had thought he had disliked Ryuzaki on sight. Tonight was just full of surprises.

“Mr. Yagami, may I introduce Koko Shintaro. Miss Shintaro, may I present Light Yagami.”

She paused just inside the doorway, to turn towards Kite and incline her head in acknowledgement, then seemingly dismissed the Beta from her notice, as was expected in chaperoned interviews. Well… She doesn’t care that there’s witness…

“Hello, may I call you Light?” she asked, politely. If he hadn’t been ready for it, even Light might have missed the gentle layering of Alpha timbre in the question.

The brunette rose from his position, and bowed slightly. “Of course, what should I call you?”

The Alpha moved to stand across the table, and Light recognized that which could not be hidden. An ingrained belief that she was the superior being in the room. She offered her hand; which Light smiled and took.

“Koko will be fine. Thank you for meeting with me.”
“Of course,” Light settled back to his seat, sitting a quarter turn askew, so that he could look partially over his shoulder at her, showing off his long unmarked neck. He noticed the Alpha’s hands twitch, and knew the subtle gesture had worked. *Let her think I’m just like any other Omega. That’ll make it all the easier for me to manipulate her…*

He had thirty minutes to learn all he could, while seducing her, while being watched, and while not getting killed. *Yeah, I got this…*

There was also an obscure chance she suspected him of being Kira, and he would need to field any sideways remarks (or at worst, direct accusations), before she infected L with the same suspicion… *Fantastic.*

*Nice and slow.* The Omega began the delicate setting of the table. He would need to forgo his customary drink, as it sent the entirely wrong message. But, if the Yggdrassills had studied him, it would be risky to deviate too much.

“He’s never done that before,” the Beta rep muttered.

“Hmm? What is it that Light Yagami has never done before?” L inquired not looking away from the monitor.

From his own experience meeting the Omega, thirty eight minutes ago, the detective could point to any number of differences in how Light Yagami greeted Alpha suitors. It was like watching a very skilled actor, doing a second take of the same commercial after the director said, ‘*Sex it up!*’ (L seriously doubted either display represented the real Light Yagami.)

The raven had already decided that a far more comprehensive background check was in order for this particular Omega. Including unsealing those curiously sealed case files. He’d sent a text to Matt to get it done ASAP. (Between the Kira-induced crash of his system, the emergency plane ride from Hong Kong to Tokyo, and the imminent Omega babysitting gig, the Beta’s response to yet another order had been, understandably, less than civil.)

Rem grumbled, shifting in her seat, clearly not liking the uncouth Alpha showing interest in her Omega.
“Light only drinks vodka martinis during these interviews.”

L watched Light pour sake for himself and Shintaro, using the pretext of replacing the bottle to lean forward, displaying his fully Omegan grace and poise. The detective did some quick mental calculations. If Light usually drank five martinis in two and a half hours, then, based on his slenderness and no matter his tolerance, the brunette would have to be quite tipsy towards the end.

The Alpha ground his teeth; Light hadn’t drank anything during their meeting, but the last thing he needed was a drunk Omega sitting across from her. The second to last thing he needed was a drunk Omega sitting next to him, in the car later.

L’s hand hovered over the silent alarm that would terminate the interview immediately.

“How many drinks has he had tonight?”

Rem sighed. “Four.”

The detective hesitated, focused on observing the dance playing out on the screen. The Omega seemed in control of himself, holding to his script. He returned his hand to his knee.

Both Light and Koko were quite good at playing their parts. He seemed shy, but interested. She seemed confident, but well bred. They even looked good together. A perfect match…

Who will make the first mistake? L frowned, watching them hold each other’s gazes as they sipped the liquor - one of the few times it was expected for an Omega to meet an Alpha’s stare.

Any error by the young brunette would be costly. Could Light actually handle this? It was one of those rare questions L couldn’t answer. His hand slid halfway back towards the kill switch. This had seemed like a good idea… until he’d found himself watching the opening scene of a horror movie… How much did he actually know about his asset? The Light Yagami on paper and the Omega smiling at the female Alpha were two very different people.

“Tell me, what would Light do, if he were to feel threatened?”

Rem whipped her head around, glaring at the right side of his face. L could actually hear her teeth
grinding. *Your Betas are very loyal to you, Light. I wonder how you managed that.* But an Alpha NPA officer had asked a question, so she grudgingly answered.

“Every Omega has a set of signals they can use if they feel that the Alpha is overstepping their bounds or trying to force them to submit. Light has never used any of them.”

“So he has never felt threatened in one of these interviews before?”

“He has not used the signals,” Rem corrected, curtly, “He is very attractive, even for an Omega… There have been instances of Alphas becoming overly aggressive, but Light has never been afraid of dealing with them himself.”

She didn’t elaborate, but the security guard next to her chuckled. L flicked him a glance, before returning his gaze to the monitors. *Did you consider me a problematic Alpha, Light? But more importantly, will you ask for help when you need it?*

He was torn between amusement and uneasiness at the Omega’s divergence from typical stereotypes. The Alpha ran his thumb over his lips, strongly debating if he should get the over-confident Light Yagami out before it was too late.

*Would I be this concerned if it were a Beta in the room?*

His hand moved away from the switch.

Koko smiled pleasantly, returning her cup to the table, leaving her left hand flat on the surface next to it, the gesture of an Alpha who wished to ask more personal questions.

“Thank you for agreeing to meet with me. I know these interviews are awkward,” the Alpha began.

Light lowered his gaze and replaced his own cup, overlaying his hands upon each other behind it. As long as she was willing to talk, he would let her drive the conversation - so that he could find out where exactly she wanted to go.
“I am honored by your interest,” he acknowledged.

“As I am honored by your hospitality.”

He smelled it then, very faint, so much so that it could almost be an accident. Alpha pheromones.

Submit.

That bitch. The Omega forced himself not to react in any way. Was it part of her plan? Or was Shintaro just so used to dominating everyone around her that it was subconscious? In either case, she would notice if he showed no signs of submission…

But Rem would notice if he did.

Well… He could fool his rep… But could he fool L?

Light let his eyes flick up to meet hers and then, very slowly fall back down. It was one of those gestures that was submissive, challenging, flirtatious and plausibly deniable all at once.

He felt Koko’s smile deepen, and both Alpha and Omega sat in silence for a small spell. Neither Rem nor L burst through the door, so it must have worked. Score one for the Omega… If all went well, she’d start asking about him next; he could use that. Her questions might not be much help for L’s case, but it would certainly tell him if the Yggdrassills suspected him of being Kira.

“Of course,” the Alpha beamed, “Perhaps I could ask you about your interests?”

All too easy.

L watched the pair smoothly trade questions and answers, back and forth. All useless small talk. He grudgingly rated Light’s acting skills a notch higher. Koko had all her lines down perfectly, so
much so that she had forgotten that, upon meeting someone new, it was normal for there to be awkward pauses. Light played off of her naturally, being reluctant and flirty and hesitantly acquiescing.

*But… something was off. Almost like… the Omega was catching himself every few moments, taking a deep breath through his mouth. He was doing everything right, so why would he…?*

*Oh.*

“I believe Koko Shintaro is trying to force Light Yagami to submit,” L announced.

The Beta rep nearly tackled him, as she lunged at the monitor to check. “What?! How can you tell? Light hasn’t signaled anything. Kite hasn’t either.”

The detective, whose reflexes had saved him from ended up on the ground, righted his chair, seriously displeased at having been dislodged from his vantage point.

“His breathing pattern is irregular,” L pointed out, using his chair to push the offending Beta out of his way. “Since he shows no signs of having been poisoned, it is likely something aromatic. As he did not wrinkle his nose when she first entered, Light Yagami is most likely reacting to a change in the Alpha’s pheromones, by breathing through his mouth and holding his breath as much as possible.”

L forcibly reinstated himself in front of the monitor, to get a better look at Light’s behavior. The Omega was still fully in control of himself, as all the small gestures that he made were clearly calculated to look like he was almost slipping. *I wonder what it would take to get you to actually submit?* While that question raised the possibility for a whole slew of interesting experiments, L sincerely hoped the answer was more than whatever subtle overtures the Omega was enduring right now.

Rem’s lips thinned as she confirmed the detective’s observations.

“We need to halt the interview now. This is unacceptable behavior in a potential mate.”

The Beta reached around him to trigger the alarm and send security pouring into the room. Without even looking away from the monitors, L’s hand shot out to grip her wrist.
L was unsurprised by how much he wanted to agree with her. *This case is too big; I will not be irrational about a single, lone Omega.* Light was doing his job, and it would be an insult to the risk the Omega was taking if the audience couldn’t stomach the tension. Especially when nothing had actually gone wrong.

“He is still in control. He has displayed none of the classic signs of submission. The conversation is still and they are both keeping a respectful distance. That Beta with him hasn’t reacted, so it’s likely the Alpha is not trying particularly hard.”

That raised another question that the detective couldn’t answer. *How much did he really know about that Beta? Could Kite Gingsu be trusted?* Even after less than an hour of acquaintance, the Alpha had already determined that Light was too valuable an asset to risk idly. An Omega who could actually hold his own against an aggressing Alpha? That was decidedly uncommon.

He sent another text to Matt to get a full dossier on the Beta.

“By the time he bares his neck, it will be too late. We need to stop this now,” Rem argued.

“Do you trust Kite Gingsu?” the Alpha asked, noting her other hand poised midair, as she seriously considered slapping him. *Try it.*

“What?” Rem snapped, jerking back. “Yes. He’s the best of all the chaperones I work with.”

*High praise… from someone obviously concerned about the Omega’s wellbeing…* L released her wrist, and ran his thumb across his lips. *Alright, Light. We’ll do this your way.*

(Matt 09:14: one more stupid-ass, secretary-level request and i burn all the cake)

(Matt 09:14: see attached)

“We will let the interview continue. If Light bares his neck, breathes deeply, or initiates physical contact we will halt the session. Otherwise, we will assume Light and his Beta have control of the situation.”

Rem snarled beneath her breath, and L rolled his eyes. There was no need to show the Beta how to actually growl right now.
Light and Koko had obviously taken no notice of the tiff occurring behind the cameras, and the small talk had carried on. L returned to focusing on what was actually being said. The female was expressing interest in the Omega’s day job. And the Omega was artfully evading giving out any actual information, while still answering her questions.

Light was good.

Very good.

Too good.

The detective’s charcoal eyes narrowed. He wouldn’t have been able to train a better operative. And I just happen to have one dropped in my lap, ready to go? That’s the probabilistic equivalent of Watari getting drunk and singing My Fair Lady at a karaoke bar. The Omega was submissive and flirtatious, all without seeming to be, getting the target to speak, maintaining composure while not obviously resisting the dominance…

L bit his lip. If they got through the rest of this interview without issue, he was going to use the following ninety minute car ride to pick apart the mystery of the police chief’s son.

If they got through the rest of this interview…

“Can I ask you a rather personal question?”

Light, sipped his sake, considering the Alpha. This is it… this is what she came here for… He placed his cup, then slid it a few inches backward, not wanting to seem overly eager.

“Of course, though I cannot promise to answer.”

He kept his eyes lowered, trying not to consider the possibility that she was about to ask him if he was secretly responsible for her boss’s arrest. He saw her hands slide forward on the table, palms down. Trying to seem respectfully curious? Well, I’m sure you are curious, at least…
“What are your thoughts on bonding?”

He couldn’t help the surprised upward flick of his amber eyes. Well that’s not the direction I thought we were going… She wasn’t kidding when she had said it was rather personal. Questions about bonding were generally reserved for mated or almost-mated couples. (Or ridiculously awkward Omega sex-ed classes, where they warned you never consider it unless you were absolutely sure.)

Why would an assassin for the Yggdrassills care about an Omega’s opinion on bonds?

“As in my general opinion of the phenomenon, or as in a bond that involved myself?”

She smiled and pulled her hands back to her lap. You know you aren’t fooling me with this innocent deference crap, right?

“Both, if you feel comfortable answering,” she said, smugly.

Well Koko, I think that bonding with you fifty lifetimes from now would be too soon…

In truth, the Omega had written a full thesis for one of his psych classes titled ‘The Detrimental Influence of Federal Policy on the Individuality of an Omega in a Bonded Pair’. The law currently treated bonded couples as single entities, more so than even married couples. If one half of a bonded pair were ever found guilty of a crime, so too would the other, regardless of circumstances. In practice, Omegas ended up paying the price for their Alpha’s nefarious addictions. Light had forty pages of well-worded dispute railing against the idea that an Omega ceased to be a sentient individual simply because he was bonded to an idiot. (The Alpha professor had tried to fail him; Light had seen him fired for discrimination.)

But you think I’m a silly romantic, so…

“I think that it is a good indicator of a healthy relationship. Not that not having a bond is an indicator of an unhealthy relationship, it is just that statistically, bonded pairs are, on average, happier and more successful.”
Her smile widened. “Are you looking for a bondmate? Generally speaking.”

_No._ “Maybe. It all depends on if I meet the right Alpha,” the Omega replied, archly. Leaving every indication that perhaps, _she_ could be the right Alpha.

“No. “Maybe. It all depends on if I meet the right Alpha,” the Omega replied, archly. Leaving every indication that perhaps, _she_ could be the right Alpha.

“Our course,” she smiled saccharinely, “I suppose the subject of bonding is a little heavy for first meetings, but it’s a topic that my colleagues and I had a rather strong disagreement about today, and I’ve been stuck thinking about it ever since.”

She leaned forward to refill both sake cups. “Anyway, I believe this is the part where I gracefully steer the conversation to some lighter subject. Have you ever been to Osaka?”

_Why? Is that where you plan to dump my body?_

Thirty minutes of unparalleled stress and Light sat alone at the table, wondering what the fuck he had missed. She hadn’t tried anything. _Anything_. She had never made physical contact with him, she had never even attempted. She hadn’t tried to poison his drink, she hadn’t probed for any useful information, on him or on Kira or even his father. She hadn’t looked twice at Kite.

_She hadn’t looked twice at Kite…_

Was that important? Was she purposefully ignoring him because Kite’s presence had ruined her plan? Had nothing happened because she’d aborted the mission before it had started?

The Omega studied the empty sake cups, wanting to swipe his arm across the table and send them shattering. _What had she wanted? And more importantly, had she gotten it?_

“Light?” Kite asked, completely unconcerned, “You ready?”

Light composed his voice to something less than furious. “Yeah, but let’s wait. Rem will want to talk with me before we leave.”
What had he missed?! What did she want?

To kill him? Hadn’t happened.

To abduct him? Hadn’t happened. Hadn’t even come close.

To get information on him? She now knew what he looked like, though she could have already gotten that from any number of sources. To see if he met some other requirements of the Yggdrassill profile? Maybe…

The Omega unconsciously let his hand drift to where his ribs had started to throb incessantly. The aspirin had run its course and his sake consumption had been too moderate to compensate. Damn it. Maybe L had figured ou-oh no, fuck that. If the detective could solve this, then so could Kira.

Light closed his eyes, trying to ignore the building pain and find the answer before he had to answer to yet another Alpha.

If I were the Yggdrassills, what would I have gotten out of this? The mating agency was the worst possible place to attack an Omega, but was the only place an Omega could be reliably known to be at any given time. Light was under no delusions that the Yggdrassills didn’t already have his home address, even with the tight security regulations in place to keep every Omega’s personal residence private. So why take the interview but not use it? Unless she had and he’d missed it? No, he’d seen everything that had happened in here just now.

So had L.

Seven minutes of waiting, and the door swung open, revealing that exact detective. Still smelling like coffee… Light tried not to glare, but he was livid with the situation, as it stood. Not knowing who knew what and not being able to deduce either the Yggdrassills or L’s next move was irritating.

But he would fix that as soon as possible…

“Did she leave?” the Omega asked, standing and hiding a wince.

“Yes,” L confirmed, “She left this room, returned to the Alpha lounges, took a cup of tea, and
exited through the front door. Absolutely nothing suspicious, whatsoever. I pulled the footage of her arrival to analyze later, but fastforwarding through it showed, again, nothing suspicious.”

Well, at least the detective sounded as frustrated as Light felt.

“She left me with a phone number, so I could use that to arrange a meeting, but I don’t think that was her goal or else she would have actually tried to seduce me. She was polite and superficially interested in a potential date, but not enough to ask for it, despite how many openings I left her.”

The raven-haired detective ran his thumb over his bottom lip, considering. “Indeed. You gave her seven overt opportunities to make plans to meet in the future.”

Light detected a hint of annoyance in L’s voice, and tried not to roll his eyes. *You’re just mad because I left you zero opportunities, right detective?*

But the Alpha kept talking. “As she did not take them, I believe we can safely conclude that she does not plan to meet you in the future. At least not under the guise of courtship.”

“Do we know which other Omega she met with tonight?” Light asked. She would have had to have had at least one other interview; not that that fact got the brunette any closer to understanding what the statuesque assassin had wanted…

Whoosh.

L was brushed aside as the Beta charged her Omega. It was becoming somewhat of a pattern. Light, at least, seemed to be used to the overbearing aggression, and now merely avoided rolling his eyes, as she grabbed his chin to check his pupil dilation.

“Light!”

“Yes, Rem?” L bit back a laugh at the Omega’s cheeky tone. *So you’re sassy in familiar company?*
“Don’t ‘Yes, Rem’ me,” the irate rep snarled. “Was that Alpha trying to pheromonally dominate you?”

“She-”

Whatever Light’s first answer might have been was cut off by the Beta growling down at him. She was incredibly tall, for either a Beta or a female. The Omega had to tilt his chin just to meet her yellow eyes. L cracked his neck, avoiding the urge to step in and defend the Omega. (Said Omega was doing just fine on his own.)

“Don’t you dare lie to me,” she snapped.

Light’s jaw clenched for the merest moment. *You wouldn’t dare lie, would you Light Yagami?* L turned his chuckle into a cough. *Although, I don’t suppose you’re particularly honest… ever…* 

The Omega sighed. “Both her tone and scent were mildly subjugative, though I do not believe she intended to overpower me,” Light admitted, “I expect that she works in a position of authority and exudes the same level of aggression regardless of the situation.”

Rem turned for a second opinion. “Kite! Is he telling the truth?”

The male Beta shrugged, and L’s black eyes narrowed.

“I noticed the scent, but she was polite and never showed overt aggression. Light would’ve signalled me if at any point he felt like he couldn’t have handled it,” the bodyguard summarized.

L nibbled on his thumb. *So you follow Light’s lead? And where does he lead you? In circles?* L turned back to study the Omega, who was hiding his indignance quite well. The Alpha felt compelled to second that vexation; Light had done extraordinarily well, holding up under intense pressure. He…

A new thought stopped him cold.

*There’s no way the Omega could be working for the Yggdrassils… was there?*
His hand slowly slid back to his pocket, black eyes trained on the police chief’s son. As much as the Alpha in him didn’t like the thought of painting the brunette as a criminal, there was the possibility. Perhaps this interview was their way of passing information… Perhaps Light Yagami wasn’t afraid of Koko Shintaro because they are in bed together - metaphorically. Perhaps… L kept his face blank, fingers tapping a slow rhythm in the pockets of his jeans.

Light was definitely hiding… something. He’d find out what it was. He always did.

Rem’s deep voice jerked the detective back into the moment.

“Light…”

But Kite’s approval seemed to cap whatever the Omega was willing to put up with from his rep.

“Rem, enough. I am fine. You saw everything that happened. If you're that worried, block her from my docket for any future interviews,” Light reasoned, before snapping his attention over to L. “How are we leaving?”

The Alpha shrugged. “Same black SUV as all the other Omegas. We will simply borrow one of the decoy vehicles. Mating agency security is not completely without its uses.”

The brunette nodded, and glanced at his chaperone. “I'll need to call my father and stop by the pharmacy before we go. Kite, you should probably drive back to my apartment, like normal.”

The detective froze… Pharmacy? Light’s medical records showed no indications of any chronic conditions. Please don’t be sick, that would be highly inconvenient, and-oh bloody hell, I’m worrying about him now, aren’t I? Grrr. Shake it off… Kira… Cake… Justice…

L turned on his heel and left the room without a backwards glance. “We should head to the vehicles. It would be best to blend in with the rest of the traffic,” he called over his shoulder.

At least no one has tried to abduct him just yet.
I do sincerely apologize for the delay in this chapter. It seems I have lost the entire month of October... Somehow... Regardless of my inability to count the passing days, I have not abandoned this story. Quite the contrary. This is now my NanoWrimo project because I just couldn't drop it.

Anywho, since it's a crime/romance/experimental mess, I had to get some plot points straightened out before I committed to any foreshadowing or false leads or interactions or really anything else happening in this chapter. And somewhere in the middle I forgot how to be sassy... Ah well, perhaps another glass of wine... (Sidebar: only drink and write if you are prepared for double the edits.)

But I should be back on track now with consistent updates.

(To everyone who expected something totally different, in the original draft, there was a bomb-actual C4-that went off, but then I couldn't get the motivational logic to tick and the logistical knot was too tangled to unravel.)
Riddle: Who is tall, dark, and should not be allowed behind the wheel of a motor vehicle?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The world’s greatest detective is driving me home…

The Omega anxiously thumbed the phone in his lap; Light had wasted a solid twenty minutes convincing his father that he felt safe enough in the presence of the Alpha to ride alone with him back into the city. But that didn’t detract from the fact that it was L sitting next to him. As in: The L.

I’m a wanted criminal, and L has me in custody. Protective custody, but still custody… Oh, this is going to go great…

So much for going to work tonight…

Light did some brief calculations: theoretically, Kira could disappear from the police radar for the rest of the case without any issue. Even if the NPA suspected the vigilante was responsible for the incident at the docks, they wouldn’t come looking for him. Before tonight, he could simply have gone to ground until if things got too personal.

Until, L got involved.

Impossible deductions on mere shreds of evidence was what the detective was known for. So if Kira disappeared from the case, just as Light appeared, this somewhat dishevelled Alpha sitting next to him was going to notice. Because that’s what L did…

So… if at all possible, I'll need to risk sending at least one communication under L’s nose… of all the fucking dangerous alibis… But that meant Kira needed intel worth communicating. And anything he learned from this point forward, L would be learning simultaneously.
Light shifted to relieve the building pressure on his ribs. (L would probably notice if he laid the seat back.)

_What would happen if L found out he was Kira?_

He’d likely be arrested, and, even if he wasn’t charged, he’d never be allowed near a computer again. It wasn’t something he was willing to chance.

But getting a better read on his companion might not be such a bad idea.

“So… you’re L?”

“I believe that’s been proven,” the famous detective responded absently.

As odd as it had been to see the raven-haired Alpha crouching in the interview, it was odder now seeing him drive in a fairly normal, if slouched, posture. And hold the steering wheel between his thumb and forefinger…

Light looked back out his own window, ignoring the vehicular danger he was in. “Having someone walk up to you and tell you he’s L himself, even if it’s confirmed by the NPA, is not your average Thursday. Why are you here?”

“I have already answered that question as well,” L noted, “The Yggdrassills are showing high levels of activity in the Tokyo area, and you are confirmed as being targeted.”

“I understand that,” Light snapped, not liking the condescending tone. “Why are you here? In person. L himself? Don’t you usually send proxies for this kind of field work?”

From the reflection in the window, Light saw the black eyes flick over to his side of the car. “And how would you know what I usually do, Light Yagami?”
Light grit his teeth, not deigning to look at the detective. “Your imposter’s exploits appear in the tabloids, your accomplishments appear in the news, and you have worked with my father before. Why are you in this car and not behind a computer screen right now?”

The Alpha nodded, and thankfully turned back to the road.

“There are two or three cases a year that I see to in person.”

“And how often do you show up at mating interviews to recruit Omegas to your cause?” Light had a minor startlement as he considered that L could show up at mating interviews for their intended purpose. He tried to hide his grin. How many Omegas have you courted, detective? You’re not very good at it…

“So far, once every thirty years.”

Huh? “You’re thirty?” Light did the mental math. Based on when L first appeared, he would have had to have been fifteen when he started solving cases. High profile ones, anyway.

“No,” the Alpha denied.

The Omega couldn’t tell if the Alpha was lying or not. Smartass.

Light send another ‘all clear’ text to his father, then let the dark ribbon of road lull his irritation, allowing him to think. Ideas swirled round and round, bringing all sorts of Kira v L v Yggdrassill scenarios through his mind. We could be heading for an actual Mexican standoff… One where ‘Light Yagami’ was the unwilling linchpin.

Unfortunately, no matter which hypothetical stratagem he employed, a single overriding truth colored his thoughts:

I’m being hunted…

Again.
“I generally do not spend time in the company of Omegas,” L interrupted.

Light noticeably jumped, as the Alpha’s deep voice derailed his train of thought. He grit his teeth. *Oh? And why would you? We’re just fuck toys that you probably don’t have time for, right?* The Omega caught himself before actually saying something quite so ill-bred aloud. The silence dragged on, but Light could tell L was waiting for him to respond.

It was unfortunate that his parents had instilled manners in their son; elsewise, he could have just ignored the Alpha. He huffed, watching his breath steam against the cold window.

“Why? Because you’re waiting until you actually are thirty to start a family?”

“No.”

Light got the distinct impression that the raven-haired detective was amused. *I repeat, smartass.*

The silence filtered back in. After a few kilometers, the Alpha again disturbed it.

“Light Yagami, why do you hate me?”

Light’s head whipped around to stare at the unabashed onyx eyes that glanced away from the windshield to meet his. “What?”

The Alpha tilted his head mockingly, with the same blank mask, before facing forward again.

“You have considerable acting talent as demonstrated by your interactions with Koko Shintaro. You have the ability to appear well mannered and polite. So either you are naturally bitter and waspish, or you are acting as such for my benefit. In either case you are expressing a pointed dislike of me. Is it because I denied you the opportunity to meet with prospective mate?”

Light turned his body full on towards the Alpha. *Unashamed insight followed by ridiculous accusation? Is that really your best move?* The detective didn’t actually seem to care what the
Omega thought of him; he just seemed… curious. Or maybe he was just trying to be as irritating as possible. *Alright, you really want to go that direction, Alpha?*

“Because you are holding your breath as much as possible,” the Omega spat, “Because you can’t even look at me without your pupils dilating. And because you are deliberately trying to control me with soothing pheromones.” *That and you would be trying to arrest me if you actually knew who I was…*

The detective nodded as Light finished, seemingly unaffected by the accusations. “I see.”

“That’s it?” Light growled. *He really has no compunction whatsoever.*

“Yes,” L said, unabashedly, “You answered the question and your reasoning is based on accurate and acute observations.”

*Those observations would be more acute if I didn’t have the same problem with every fucking Alpha I met.* (Unless there were scent blockers involved.) “So you admit you want to fuck me?”

“Hmm? No, not at all. If I did, I would not bother holding my breath nor look away from you. As for trying to soothe you, you are agitated and, in the interest of dealing with you as a rational human being, I would prefer it if you calmed down.”

Light very nearly gaped. (Manners saved him the embarrassment.)

L didn’t give him a chance to recover. “What prescriptions are you taking?”

*Fuck.*

The broken bones were the single piece of evidence tying him to the docks. If that security guard talked (which he would), the police would be looking for someone with this type of injury.

*Well L, I will be taking oxycodone to alleviate the pain of having my ribs bashed in while I was breaking and entering in relation to the same case for which you are now absconding with me.*
Unfortunately, there was no way to lie about which medications he was on, without getting caught. The detective might even already know, from talking to Rem. Lying and getting caught could be worse than suspicious coincident.

“Why is that relevant?” Light stalled.

“Several reasons. If I put you in the field, heavy medication could impair your judgement. Even if it’s harmless, you may be put in a position where you cannot take medication at the correct time.”

Light sighed. Of course the detective would have a perfectly rational explanation for needing to know.

“There are two prescriptions. Pain medication and… heat suppressants.”

The Alpha sensed the hesitation, just as Light knew he would. As much as he wanted to pull attention away from the oxycodone, the brunette wished he had something less embarrassing to do it with than heat suppressants. Would reminding L of his Dynamic’s limitations cause the Alpha to dismiss him? It could be good for hiding his secret identity, but, if the world’s greatest detective was that much of a dynamicist, the world was far more rotten than he’d thought.

“What day would you expect your heat to start without the suppressants?” L asked.

Light felt his cheeks burn. “Is this strictly necessary?”

“Yes,” the detective replied, without hesitation. How can he be so shameless? Heats were decidedly private things.

Light glanced back out the window, feeling more blood rush to his face. But, if L could be clinical about this, so could he. “Without suppressants and based on my normal cycles, it should start next Wednesday. My preheats are typically three days. I would start taking the suppressants on Sunday, maybe Saturday night.”

“Hmm… I will brief you on the case tonight, you will likely sleep for eight hours, leaving us with most of tomorrow. Koko Shintaro’s actions suggest the Yggdrassills could move on you in the next twenty four hours. Whatever happens we will reevaluate in the early hours of Saturday morning, so your heat will not interfere with immediate plans. What is the pain medication for?”
It took Light a second to recover from the blunt outline of his weekend itinerary, but when he did, he needed a deep breath. *Time to sell it…*

“I was doing laundry this morning, and fell down the stairs.”

The Omega was now committed to the lie, but, as long as he didn’t screw it up, there should be no way to disprove his story.

“Are you alright?”

The brunette rolled his eyes. “Are you asking because you’re worried about my performance in the field or because your Alpha instincts are telling you to take care of the poor, broken Omega?”

“The former.”

*At least we’re both lying to each other.* But L was right, the Yggdrassils weren’t going to care how he broke his ribs, as long as it helped them drag him into their white van.

“I’m fine.”

That being said, it would be rather suspicious if he had the *exact* same injuries as a certain someone. The security guards from the shipping company would talk eventually. Hell, they were probably trying to pin the whole thing on him.

Would the guard he’d fought know it was an Omega who’d drugged him? He had hesitated when the Alpha had tried to dominate him. How much did L already know? *I have to assume he knows everything…*

L studied the Omega’s reflection in the windshield. The man was defensive, but cooperative; a rare combination, usually only seen in cops whose jurisdiction he was treading on. The fact that Light was hurt might explain some of his animosity.
“What are your injuries?”

“I landed on my right side. My shoulder and hip are sore and I have a couple bruised ribs. Rem said they might be fractured, but she couldn’t tell for sure. I’ve been on aspirin and that’s been sufficient for the last six hours.”

L tried not to react, but there was an stubborn, injured Omega next to him. *You couldn’t have just worn the same thing twice this week?*

That schema point drew L’s attention to what the brunette’s attire, which led to a cursive raking over of his passenger's lean form. *Oh fucking hell…*

*What would Kira do?*

*Go back in time and rescue you from the staircase? Probably. (Obsessing about the vigilante was becoming his go-to distraction, as the detective tried to ignore the tantalizing scent permeating the car.) Regardless, L was going to demand Matt do an independent evaluation of the Omega’s health when they reached the safe house. He needed to know exactly how able Light was.*

But for now: “If you had to run, could you?”

The Omega considered his answer carefully. “Probably. I wouldn’t be at my fastest, and my endurance is likely less than normal right now. Though in a situation where I would have to run, I’d likely have a strong surge of adrenaline that could compensate.”

L was about to ask how much self defense training the Omega had, when his phone vibrated. He pinched it between his thumb and index finger, putting his subtle interrogation of Light Yagami on hold.

“He’s not working for the Yggdrassills,” Matt confirmed, in his ear, without ceremony.

*He’s getting quicker.* L had gotten used to his only Beta successor understanding the why’s of his assignments without being told. *Mello should probably be warned…*
“You’re sure?”

“Yep. I trolled through every NPA officer’s computer looking for references to ‘Yagami, Light’, thinking that if he had any criminal ties, they might have been respectfully overlooked, on account of his father’s rank, and, gimme a raise cuz I’m good, found some interesting off-the-record notes on your little Omega.”

The Beta sounded entirely too pleased with himself. Fortunately, the news that Light Yagami was not going to present a major security threat to his operation was good enough that L was willing to let his successor continue.

“A couple years back, he wrote a paper outlining how the Ferid-Kolen deal would have been structured, down to the body count, using just the media reports. His father later brought it to the lead investigator on the case, when it became clear that the assassination inside the Greek embassy was linked to Ferid Yggdrassill. It led to a bunch of arrests in both the Yggdrassill and Altina families. Since it was an international incident, the NPA couldn’t credit a college student with the breakthrough, so his name never got tagged on the case. He got lucky there or he’d’ve been dead and buried by now.”

Indeed… So he’s not working with the Yggdrassills… He could be working for a rival. But the odds of that were less than 2%. “Anything else?”

“Well, since the heading on the paper was ‘Evolution of Contemporary Organized Crime in Japan, Assignment 6’, I poked around to find assignments 1 through 5.”

“And?”

“He’s more opinionated than Mello.”

The Alpha risked a peak at the young man beside him, who was very pointedly not looking his direction. Not particularly surprising. I wonder what would happen if I put them in a room together…

“Meaning?” L prodded.

“He’d make a terrible therapist.”
“Any luck on the unsealing the other files?”

“Not yet,” Matt grumbled, “Since they involve at least one Omega, the records aren’t kept on the NPA’s servers. A judge has to approve it and then the Bureau of Omega Protection and Privacy releases them, which, since you’re L, should happen around 10:00 a.m. tomorrow. Usually it takes two weeks.”

“A small growl escaped the Alpha, causing further discomfort on Light’s part, resulting unnecessary guilt on L’s conscious. *Grr. Such high-maintenance creatures.* When he was behind the computer, the detective could growl as much as he wished without issue. (His voice altering software was quite efficient at filtering it out.) *Though he’s still not scared…*

“Good work,” L replied, “Let me know if you get anything else.”

The call ended and he let the phone drop back to the cupholder.

“You’re investigating me,” Light accused. “Why didn’t you do that before telling me you were L?”

*Good question.* Though technically the detective had read a full background check on the Omega before arriving at the agency tonight. *Hmm, let’s see how guilty you are. Oblique accusations should get you talking…*

“Your official file is clean. However, that is also true of many criminals.”

“You think I planned to meet with Koko Shintaro,” the brunette snarled, “You think I could be helping them!” He sounded quite disgusted by the very notion.

*Opinionated indeed. And extraordinarily quick on the uptake. I thought I was going to have to be*
more explicit with those implications…

L could feel Light’s eyes boring into his profile. “If that is truly what you think, then you made a grave mistake revealing your identity. How do you know that *Koko* and I didn’t have a code worked out and I just told her everything about you?!”

*You were sounding so innocent right up until that last part.*

Most of the intelligent criminals L dealt with loved pointing out how inferior law enforcement was, compared to their own brilliance. They also loved making it look like they were innocent by saying things it would be truly stupid to say if they were guilty. In reality, it was just one of the simplest applications of reverse psychology. *You’re lucky I already know you aren’t working with them.*

“If you are going to continue to confess…”

“That was not a confession! That was me seriously questioning your intelligence.”

*Sounding guiltier by the moment, Light… Please don’t make me arrest you. The idea of you in handcuffs is a little too appealing. Damnit! Kira!* Though, L was also honestly just amused by the heated reaction he was getting from the Omega at this point. It was fair recompense for his distractingness.

“Then perhaps you could offer an explanation for why there are two sealed cases attached to you name.”

“I’m sure you’ll read them and find out,” Light snapped, turning his back on the Alpha.

L was actually surprised. *So he’s innocent…* A guilty man would have had to have told the whole story to explain away any fault that lie in his quarter.

Yet, the brunette was clearly distressed by the topic. Meaning that, when L unsealed those files, he was likely going to find out what Light Yagami had been a victim of. It wasn’t entirely unanticipated, Omegas were usually the victims.
Light certainly didn’t act like one though… (Which was helpful, else L might have felt the need to comfort him.)

He was making good progress with the Omega though.

“Wha-”

His phone vibrated again. Or not…

“… I see … … Yes, do that … I will tell him.”

Light shifted around to study the Alpha’s face, still furious that L had suggested he was abetting those bastards and digging into things that did not concern him. The speaker was too quiet for Light to over hear the other half of the conversation, and those unblinking black eyes gave away nothing.

The brunette was left to study the odd way raven-haired man gently gripped the phone. While maintaining control of their vehicle with his other thumb and forefinger… Who in the world gave you a license?

But, more relevantly, Watari would not be calling L with news for Light unless it was bad. His gut clenched.

We missed something…

It only took a few seconds longer for L to end the call.

“Tell me what?” Light demanded, unwilling to sit in ignorance.

To his credit, the Alpha didn’t hesitate.
“The SUV your Beta was driving was hit by another vehicle, resulting in a rolling collision. Traffic surveillance and witnesses both confirm a man ran to the SUV, searched the interior, and fled with the driver of the second vehicle. Ambulances arrived and pulled Kite Gingsu from the wreck. He’s alive, but in critical condition, currently being transported to Takanawa Hospital.”

Fuck…

Light went numb. Fuck… There was only one possible way this could have happened.

“She planted a bug on him.”

“Hmm?”

Light closed his eyes, picturing it. “Shintaro. We were so focussed on her interaction with me that we didn’t look closely enough at what else she did while she was there. The Betas socialize with the Alphas, looking and listening for any suspicious behavior, while trying to keep them calm and happy and preventing them from getting competitive or anxious. She would have put a tracker on him. The plan was never to get to me at the agency. Taking a target on the move. Easiest way to do it. The only reason she interviewed with me at all, was to confirm I was suitable for abduction.”

And I missed it… it was right fucking there.

The Alpha was silent, clearly making his own assessment of the situation.

“I believe you are mostly correct. However, there is a 72% chance that the bug was planted by another Yggdrassill associate. I reviewed every minute of Shintaro’s time at the agency. She never came into direct contact with your Beta.”

So they had used a secondary hitman.

There were plenty of faces in the Yggdrassill family that no one had ever seen. Henchmen likely born and raised by another abducted Omega a generation ago. For something so small, it might not have even been a family member. A simple threat for a simple job. It could have been one of the agencies people…
Not that it mattered.

*I still should have known.*

“Is he going to make it?” Light asked, belatedly.

Usually, this was where the Alpha laid a comforting hand on the Omega’s shoulder, said ‘don’t worry’, showed some unsubtle pity, and repeated ‘don’t worry, it’ll be okay’. Light curled his arms around himself, praying the detective wasn’t about to pull over and hug him. That would happen after the detective unsealed his past anyway, and, as much as it would make him look guilelessly Omegan, L would think of him as… helpless.

*At least he won’t ever think I could be Kira… but at a steep price…*

“They don’t know,” L answered.

Light’s head jerked up to give the older man a disbelieving stare. The detective was still watching the road, lost in his own thoughts. He didn’t seem to plan on saying anything else… which was just… weird.

“Thank you,” Light said softly, looking away.

“Hmm?”

“For not lying. Or trying to sugar coat it.” The lights of the city blurred by.

Light was supposed to have been in that SUV; he would have been riding home with Kite tonight, if L hadn’t shown up at the exact moment he did.

“They know you’re onto them now.”
The Yggdrassills would figure out that the police had come for him.

“My conclusions as well,” the detective murmured, “Watari has already instructed your father to take the other Omegas matching the profile into full protective custody, immediately. However, I am more concerned that they will widen their search parameters.”

“And what exactly are those parameters?” What is it about Omegas like me that makes people like them murder and steal? Do tell L, do tell.

“Omega. Twenty to twenty five. Japanese male. Blood type A+. Unmated. Presented exceptionally early. They are also taking female victims of any ethnicity, who match all the other criteria. You would be the perfect victim, as kidnapping you would be vengeance against the NPA for the arrest of Shishio Yggdrassill, in addition to your other qualifications.”

Light had a flicker of respect for the detective: that was a highly detailed profile. There had to be only a handful of Omegas in the city who matched it exactly. But, L had a good point. Would the Yggdrassills really care if the Omega they took was eighteen or twenty eight? There were a lot more Omegas at risk than the NPA could protect.

“How much farther to… are you taking me to a safe house?”

“In a manner of speaking. We are staying in a condo that I use as a base of operations when I work from Tokyo; we are twelve minutes away.”

Light nodded, and fell silent. For the first time, the detective let the quiet lie. The Omega organized his emotions, combing them into line with his imminent counterstrike. The Yggdrassills were going to pay. Dearly.

L’s base of operations, huh? Kira could work with that.

Chapter End Notes

So L is driving a certain Omega home... But the date's not going particularly well... What's a poor Alpha to do?
(This is why I should hire an editor just for the comment's section.)

Thank you everyone who is putting up with my sporadic updates! I promise I'm not abandoning things and I have rough drafts of the next seven chapters waiting to not look like Fifty Headed Hydras.

Happy Last Month of 2016!
Late Night Amalgamate

Chapter Summary

Light meets L’s parents? In what is not a ninth date in any way, shape or form.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

“Hello Mr. Yagami, my name is Watari,” the elderly Alpha greeted him, politely, bowing before turning to the detective behind him. “Ryuzaki, we have a developing situation. Additionally, I pulled footage of the attack on Kite Gingsu.”

The Omega’s lips parted in surprise. So Watari doesn’t know you told me your real identity?

Light took the man’s hand, suddenly feeling more relaxed than he had all night. The greying gentlemen had one of those comforting, grandfatherly presences; it also helped that he wasn’t a complete stranger. ‘Watari’ was a well known persona in the NPA; his father had met and even trusted this man.

Now the Omega knew why.

The younger, raven-haired Alpha slouched out of the elevator beside him, close enough for the brunette to feel the warmth seeping through the space between them. You do realize it’s rude for an Alpha to invade an Omega’s space like this, right L? Unfortunately, Light was coming to understand that the man simply had no respect for social etiquette. That didn’t make it any less annoying.

“Is Matt set up?” L asked, oblivious to the discomfort of his guest.

“He just arrived,” Watari confirmed, nodding at the lit room at the end of the corridor.

The detective stalked off down the hall without a second glance at the brunette he’d spent so much effort to bring home with him.
“I need to call my father,” Light said, watching L’s retreating back. He shook himself, and refocused on Watari. “Will this Matt person be willing to speak with him?”

“Of course, please follow me,” Watari nodded mannerly and turned to follow the detective.

Light trailed after the two Alphas, deeper into the condo, taking careful stock of the subtle wealth displayed. It was elegant, but not showy. Either L secretly had some taste, or there was a very well paid interior decorator bopping about Tokyo.

The workspace Watari led the Omega to was a different story. L’s technical set up was something Kira could fully appreciate. He might even be jealous - if L had had an overstuffed, silk-upholstered armchair. (The espresso machine was also missing, but based on the dark, gourmet kitchen they’d passed, coffee wasn’t going to be an issue.)

Buried among the multitude of papers and monitors, Light spotted a solitary, living creature, noticeable only by the bright red hair contrasting sharply with the black electronics. The Beta paid the new arrivals no mind, completely engrossed in his code, until Watari politely coughed beside him.

“What?” the redhead grumbled, glancing over his shoulder.

“Matt, I’d like to introduce Light Yagami. He’s the Omega you’ll be chaperoning during this case.”

The Beta’s gaze flicked over to the brunette, and Light felt the need to punch something. Hard. This guy had to be younger than he was for fuck’s sake. Being permanently chaperoned was insulting enough, but to be guarded by a kid? Like Omegas were really that pathetic?

Neither of the two felt the need to acknowledges each other further, and Light quickly turned back to Watari. “I’m going to call my father now.”

The old Alpha nodded, and left to attend his own system of high-grade surveillance equipment.

The Omega retreated to the window, tuning out the trio behind him and gazing out at his city. He sighed before pressing send, knowing his father was about to ask all the wrong questions.
“Light!” Chief Yagami shouted, “Are you alright? Did L tell Ryuzaki about the accident? I’m on my way to the hospital now. Stay calm, it’ll be alright. Ryuzaki didn’t try anything, did he? Is the new Beta there now?”

*Wrong questions, dad.*

Light leaned his forehead against the glass, wishing he could press his throbbing ribs against the cool surface, trying not to let the reality sink in. *The Yggdrassills will pay for this; they have severely underestimated their opponent.* Kira was going to bury them. Light carefully tucked the vengeful wrath back behind his perfect son facade.

“Yes, dad, I’m fine. Ryuzaki was perfectly professional and my new chaperone is here. What have the doctors said about Kite?”

“It… doesn’t look good.” His father paused. When he spoke again, Light could hear all thirty years of police service weighing on his father’s voice. It was the frustration that only seasoned cops on difficult cases could feel. “It’s like I keep just sending body after body to the hospital. He’s in surgery; I’ll call you as soon as I hear something new. Don’t worry, it’ll be alright, Light.”

“Thanks dad.” The Omega closed his eyes. Kite wasn’t exactly a close friend, but Light had hand selected him from a long list of candidates; the Beta’s current condition was a consequence of that choice.

Light leaned his back against the window, facing the room again, and redirected his attention back into the conversation. The chief of the NPA was gone, and now it was just Soichiro Yagami talking.

“Light, I want to hear from you every hour. Call or text. This is serious. I don’t know where you are, and right now that’s necessary, but I’m not going to let you just disappear.”

The brunette’s jaw clenched, knowing that this was every Omega’s parent’s worst fear, from the moment they presented.

“Dad, I’ll be fine. I’ll be here all night, and so will my temporary chaperone. L sent Watari, so he and Ryuzaki will also be here.”
“Watari’s there?”

His father sounded relieved hearing that, and, looking at the elderly gentleman conversing with L, Light agreed. The old Alpha gave meaning to the phrase ‘manners matter’. Take notes, L….

“Yes, I’m going to sleep soon, but I’ll text you hourly starting at eight o’clock tomorrow.” Light swallowed as he considered something he should have a few hours ago. “I’ll take care of myself, but, Dad, if the Yggdrassils want revenge, they might not just be after me. They could go after mom or Sayu.”

“I know. I have Matsuda and Aizawa staying the night with them, they’ll work on the case from the house. I already spoke to To Oh, and Sayu is now on medical leave for the next couple weeks.”

“Alright,” Light swallowed. Sayu. He desperately wanted to be back at his office where he could track her every movement personally. Matsuda and Aizawa are good cops; they won’t… It’ll be fine. “Just, let me know if anything happens.”

“Same with you. I love you Light.”

“Love you too, Dad,” Light walked back towards his new babysitter, “Did you want to talk to the Beta they have chaperoning me?”

“Yes, put him on.”

The Beta had no clue the brunette was even behind him, until Light gave up waiting and rudely pushed the phone into his eyeline. The redhead didn’t even look away from his screen, as he leaned his ear to the speaker and answered Soichiro Yagami’s questions with detached, simple one word statements. The voice on the other end of the phone became brusquer and more Alpha-like with each clipped response. The Omega smirked; this new Beta wasn’t winning any brownie points with the NPA Chief right now. At least the conversation was short; the Beta didn’t even end the call as he tossed the phone back over his shoulder and returned to work.

If you never leave those computers, we’ll get along just fine, nanny.

Light pocketed the device and wandered over to the mass of screens L was immersed in.
The detective was clicking through scores of documents cluttering the monitors: records, photos, maps of different areas of the city. Several live feeds showing suspects sitting at interrogation tables played across the top. Light recognized some as Yggdrassill family members from his own research. Clearly, the Alpha had been studying the pack for a while; his system looked much like the dormant one waiting in Nonaka Tower.

The Omega ground his teeth; maps go on the left…

He peered over the Alpha’s shoulder to the feed currently playing. It only took a second for Light to realize that he was watching the attack on Kite. Based on the angle, it had to be taken from a traffic camera at the nearest intersection. Unfortunately, it was two blocks away from the crime scene. The feed played through once, before L restarted it from the beginning.

“They want me alive at least.”

“Hmm?”

Light pointed at the screen. “They hit Kite’s car from the rear driver’s side; as far away from where I should have been sitting as possible.”

“Yes, that is accurate.” Dark eyes flicked back to pierce him. “What else do you notice?”

*Testing me? Fine, detective, I'll tell you what I notice…*

“Other than the two suspects, one driving and one searching the SUV, there’s not much to notice on camera. The first suspect drives the car, causes the collision. The second suspect approaches, searches the interior, doesn’t find me, and aborts the mission. Witnesses merely see a concerned citizen trying to help, so they don’t look twice at him. He then pulls his accomplice out from his vehicle and together they flee. The explosion was probably rigged, to draw attention away from their getaway and destroy any evidence they left behind. Kite survived because they were in a hurry and he got lucky that the collision rolled his side of the SUV away from the blast. You can probably pull a rough profile of the first two suspects, estimating height and weight, but otherwise there’s not much to see.”

“You said that was what we could notice on camera. And off camera?”
“Off camera, we can make several deductions. If I had been in that SUV, they would have needed a way to transport me. Most likely, there was a third accomplice driving a getaway vehicle. It would need to be large enough that they could have thrown me in quickly. Either a van, or possibly even an ambulance, if they were feeling bold. I’m guessing this is the closest feed you were able to find, but there might be other cameras in the area that caught the vehicle they used to flee with. You could also track Kite’s route from the agency to this point, looking for any vehicles matching those criteria that followed him. I admit it’s a long shot, but we might be able to get a plate or possibly their faces. More importantly and, like I mentioned in the car, the Yggdrassills know that I have police protection now, since that’s the only explanation for me not being with my chaperone. It will be harder to bait them by putting me in a random public setting. We might be able to get them to target me if I return to my apartment for clothing, or if I visit the NPA station house to speak with my father. Neither of those things would raise their suspicion of a trap, but it would be upping the risk they would need to take to abduct me significantly. The chances of them changing targets is extremely high; if the NPA has the manpower, you should increase the protection on the other Omegas who fit the profile. And look for potential victims who are two to three years outside their preferred age range, since that sounds like the only flexible criteria. They probably won’t use the same trick twice, but if those Omegas have mating interviews coming up, their Betas should take precautions that they aren’t tracked the same way Kite was. I assume you built this profile based on Omegas you’d already recovered? You should add protection to them, since the Yggdrassills might try to retake them...”

Light trailed off, suddenly very aware of the three pairs of eyes boring into him.

“What?”

“Damn, son,” Matt laughed, “And here I thought babysitting you was going to be boring.”

“I’m pretty sure I’m older than you are. Babysit yourself,” Light hissed. He turned back to L. “Did I miss anything?”

The Alpha regarded him, running his thumb over his lips, yet again. Those black eyes were calculating and Light tried not to smirk. No, L, I don’t miss things.

“No, but I am curious as to why you’re so calm. You could have died tonight.”

Because I have seen far worse than a fuzzy clip of a car crash? The Omega could hardly say that out loud though, so he chose an equally true response.

“My father is the Chief of the NPA; our family has been targeted before. And you’re wrong.
They’re not trying to kill me. They’re trying to abduct me, and when they get whatever they want from me, they’ll sell me to some rich Alpha to be his private fuck toy. Which, to be fair, would probably be worse than death, but, again, our family has been targeted before.”

All three sets of eyes were staring at him. Again. The Omega huffed. They were never going to get anywhere like this. *Alright, my turn to ask the questions.*

“What is the situation Watari mentioned?”

The detective regarded the creature in front of him with exponentially increasing curiosity. *And the Yggdrassills were planning to drug him senseless? That would be beyond wasteful…*

“What’s the second?”

“One of the kidnapped Omegas wandered into the NPA headquarters thirty eight minutes ago.”

Light stiffened dramatically. *The car you were supposed to be in is attacked, and this is what bothers you?* The Alpha bit back a growl at the slightly distressed scent of chocolate. (In his expert opinion, distress and chocolate had no business coexisting in the same space.)

“What?” the Omega snapped.

L spun back to the console and skimmed through Detective Mogi’s report. “Bianca Pillay. Disappeared from her home in Bloemfontein, South Africa six weeks ago. She matches the profile.”

Light was clearly not appeased. “And she just turned up at the police station?”
“She was carrying a SIM card that appears to explain how she got there. Officers are on site at the Chohiro Docks, where it seems she was being held, before arriving at the station.”

If anything, that made it worse. The brunette was shaking now, with what appeared to be anger. *What is it, Light? Do you deduce something I don’t? That would be depressing… Or is this an Omega thing?*

Even the young Beta took notice of the Omega’s scent and finally decided to do some chaperoning. The redhead moved to stand behind the pair, angled like he was going to dive between them. Out of the corner of his eye, L saw Watari, returning with the tea, drop it on the nearest table and hurry to hover behind the duo as well.

*If everyone, could stop being distracting, that would be lovely. Evidence is being processed…*

“What was on it?” Light demanded, oblivious to the disturbance he was causing.

L ran his fingers over the keyboard, filling the screens with the images all too similar to the ones he’d spent all day staring at. Some of the outside a freight box. Some of an Omega inside a freight box. He felt the air stir as Light leaned over his shoulder to get a closer look at the screens. The Alpha in him felt the primal urge to forcibly console the man. *Cursed Omega pheromones. If you weren’t being so damned useful, I’d throw you into a sterile bubble.*

“He’s too focussed on the Omega,” Light commented, pointing to some of the later images.

“Hmm?” L returned his attention to the monitors.

“The pictures. Whoever took them is clearly obsessed with this Omega. He focusses on her neck, ignoring everything else inside the container.”

*So you noticed that too? Interesting.* L hadn’t yet told Light about the other evidence that had been found when the Omega turned up, but the brunette was getting startlingly close from just a few pictures. “You think the man who took these pictures desired her?”

“Yes. See how her hair is different in these two photos? He swept it back. He wanted to touch her.”
“And why do you think he would do that?” L asked, watching Light study the photos.

“Like I said, because he was obsessed with her. That means he’s probably an Alpha.”

Okay, I’m impressed. “You are correct. She was raped within an hour of having been dropped at the police station.”

The brunette Omega’s jaw clenched, and Matt suddenly realized it was time to intervene. Even Watari was affected by the abrupt outpouring of rage-filled pheromones. The Beta pulled Light away from the computers, putting some distance between them and the Alphas, both of whom instinctively tracked the furious creature with their eyes.

L growled at the sight of Matt’s hands on the Omega’s shoulders.

Matt was smart enough not to block the Alphas’ eyeline, but otherwise ignored the outburst.

“Yo, calm it down. I know you probably don’t interact with Alphas too much, but the way you’re smelling right now is kinda dangerous.”

The brunette looked like he wanted to flog the redhead, and the sheer amusingness of that possibility snapped the younger Alpha out of it. L briefly contemplated who would win that fight. Matt, if you get your jaw broken, I’m not cleaning it up.

However, the Omega surprised the detective again, when he turned around and took several calming breaths. The tension in the room slowly dissipated as the young man regained control of himself.

“I’m fine,” Light said, turning back around. “I apologize for my outburst. We should be focussing on the two events that occurred tonight.”

“I agree,” L added, turning back to the screens. “Light, if you can stay calm, I’d like to hear any other opinions you might have on the rest of the evidence.”

The Omega nodded and pulled up a chair to sit beside the detective. Watari caught L’s eye, giving
him the canonical ‘behave yourself’ look, before retrieving and pouring the tea. *I am behaving myself, he’s the one throwing temper tantrums.*

“Do you have any coffee?” Light asked, tentatively. The detective could almost hear the perfect mask clicking back into place on the handsome face.

“Of course, I’ll be right back.” Watari disappeared into the kitchen; L smirked. *Manipulative little bugger…* The Alpha knew Light was only politely giving Watari an excuse to compose himself.

L dropped the appropriate number of sugar cubes into his cup, as he pulled up the of footage Mogi had sent from Chohiro. Unfortunately this time, there was only video from more independent cameras, presumably installed by the Yggdrassils. (Like the first raid, the dock’s primary surveillance had been taken offline before the action.)

“This is the second Omega who has turned up at the NPA with a SIM card in twelve hours,” L informed the brunette on his left. “The first one was not sexually assaulted. He was rescued from the Pondu Shipping Company circa 3:00 a.m., Thursday morning. We have footage from both rescues.”

The Omega nodded slowly, clearly endeavoring to stay calm. “Can you play it?”

The detective complied, more interested in watching the Light’s reactions than the feeds themselves, as he had already watched it all and come away dissatisfied. He played them chronologically, starting with Kira’s (probably Kira’s) raid on box MY607X. Light’s amber eyes flicked between the three feeds, watching the vigilante move into the box and emerge with the drugged Omega. The two disappeared from the screen and L cued the next video.

“Is this…” The Omega’s question trailed off, as amber eyes widened upon seeing the footage from the Seaboard Maritime. New distress wafted off the young man and L focussed on slurping his tea. *What’s upsetting you now?*

Out of the corner of his eye, he discerned those perfect lips parting and the young man’s breathing becoming shallower and shallower. *Don’t freak out again or Watari will make me put you in time out… Although, why are you so sensitive all of a sudden?*

“This is footage from an American vessel docked at Pondu,” the detective offered, answering Light’s half asked question, keeping his tone neutral.
Light’s attention was locked on the screen. L’s attention was locked on the Omega. *Your reactions are notably strong. Why?* L saw the brunette cringe when the vigilante went down. And shiver when the two men disappeared into the water.

“That’s all we have from the first rescue. This is the second.”

L played the raid on the second shipping company. He’d only watched it once so far, yet this rescue seemed… much less heroic.

Three camera angles showed the man in black running up to a similar crate, picking a similar lock, and rescuing a similar Omega. Same clothing, same lockpicks, same everything.

Almost.

The guards responded much faster this time. The man in black used the same approach as before, trying to fight the guards, even getting a syringe into one, until it became clear that knocking the guards out wasn’t going to work.

That was when the vigilante started shooting. Five bullets, five bodies.

L sensed the rage simmering under the surface to his left. Light was fighting it, trying not to let the Alpha know he was upset. The detective didn’t blame him; he was enraged too. *Kira, you crossed a line.*

The man on screen then pulled the Omega back up and dragged the girl out of frame, leaving the five dead guards to fill the monitor. After a few minutes, two new guards arrived to burn the contents of the container, just like the first time. With the fire lit, the guards fled, and all that was left was the flicker of flames.

The raven-haired detective reached out and paused the video. He sat there sulking. There was a 97% chance that it was the same man in both videos, and a 88% chance that that man was Kira. L had known that the vigilante played fast and loose with the law, but this was different. The security guards, in both cases, had technically just been doing their jobs. Kira, if that was indeed who was under the hood, was now guilty of murder.
“Can you play this again, in slow motion?” Light whispered.

L blinked at the Omega. “So you noticed it, too?”

“Well, Light is still worth taking to, even if Kira isn’t.”

“I was referring to the broken ribs the man who rescued Bianca Pillay had,” the detective commented sullenly, “He tried to strike the first guard, but could only extend to 70% of his reach; during the heart of the fight, he unevenly protected his right side. He clearly had sustained recent injury to his right thorax.”

“So you think the same man rescued both Omegas?” Light hissed.

“You don’t? There’s only a 3% chance you’re right and I get the feeling you don’t like to be wrong, Light… You are quite smart though… Alright, convince me.”

“Not necessarily,” the detective allowed, “though there is strong circumstantial evidence to support that theory. At the very least, their height and build are similar. The man who rescued Haru Hayashida was hit in the side hard enough to drop him to the ground, likely fracturing several ribs. The man who rescued Bianca Pillay had a debilitating injury to the same area. Also, the events themselves are extraordinarily similar-”

“Too similar,” the Omega interrupted.

The Alpha swiveled in his chair, meeting the amber eyes head on. “Oh? How so?”

“Why would a man who had his ribs broken under twenty four hours ago, go out looking for trouble this soon?” Light asked, crossing his arms.

L swallowed a growl. *Stop challenging me, unless you want me to pin you to the floor.* “Like you said, he was obsessed with Bianca Pillay; he couldn’t resist looking for her, even with the injury. Alphas have been known to go to extreme lengths for their Omegas. It’s actually quite common.”
“Then why would he abandon her at the police station?” Light countered.

“All the Omegas the Yggdrassills have abducted have been infected with a new drug; if he didn’t want her to die, he would have needed to get her immediate medical attention.” Though I agree that it’s odd he would take her to the police instead of the hospital...

“Then why take the time to rape her? And why leave her with a SIM card? For that matter, why take the pictures in the first place?”

“Because he was obsessed with her. To expound his heroism. And to show the police what the Yggdrassills were drugging her with,” L counted off.

Light snorted. “The drugs weren’t even in focus in those pictures. He clearly didn’t care about what was being pumped into her veins.”

“There were pictures of the drugs from the first rescue,” the Alpha pointed out. Despite himself, L was getting excited. Light was the most intelligent sounding board he’d had to play with in a long time. “Perhaps he assumed they were the same ones and no further documentation was necessary.”

The Omega ground his teeth.

“If he were doing all this, breaking into shipping yards, fighting and… killing the security guards, all for Bianca Pillay, then he would not have let her out of his sight. Nor would he have risked his life like that for the first Omega.”

“Unless he thought the first Omega could tell him where his preferred Omega was.”

“How long did it take for Hayashida to show up at the NPA?” Light snarled. “You said the Omegas were too drugged to give any sort of witness, right? If he was looking for information, he wouldn’t have dropped the boy off at the station without getting some answers first, and he couldn’t have done that while Hayashida was still drugged.”

The Omega was becoming incensed again; Watari and Matt both hovered just out of range, eavesdropping, but not intervening. Yet.
And Light’s coffee was getting cold.

“And what do you think happened, Light Yagami?” the detective asked, wanting to hear the brunette’s views before they were interrupted.

Light hesitated, before speaking slowly. “I don’t know. But, as a man with severely bruised ribs. I can tell you that they hurt like hell. So whoever rescued Haru Hayashida would not have gone back out later the same day for another Omega unless he was desperate for her, specifically. And anyone, already that strongly attached to a different Omega, would not have risked his life to rescue Haru Hayashida in the first place.”

*As a man with severely bruised ribs, you have a good point.*

L nibbled on the tip of his thumb. Windfalls of evidence were accumulating incredibly quickly; it often happened in multifaceted cases, and this was when detectives usually made mistakes. The Alpha needed to think. And quickly.

*Broken ribs…*

“Light, are you in pain?”

“Huh? No. I took extra aspirin as we left, so I feel fine.”

*You’re lying. I can see it in your breathing.*

“Why haven’t you taken the prescription pills yet?”

“Because Rem gave me oxycodone, and, while you all have been exceedingly polite, I prefer not to be drugged around strangers.”

L felt a sudden stab of guilt. The Omega was right; he hid it well, but Light could easily be feeling cornered.
“Light,” Watari interrupted, “I realize that this is an extraordinary situation, so some exemptions to propriety will have to be allowed, but you should know, that as Alphas, Ryuzaki and I will develop natural urges to protect you. Hearing that you might be in pain is stressful for us, and hearing that you’re in pain because you’re afraid of us is worse.”

“I am not afraid of any of you,” the brunette contradicted, “I simply prefer to be fully aware of my surroundings, particularly when they are new.”

*Well, I don’t disagree with you…* L looked over to his mentor, subtly hinting that he wanted to continue discussing the case with the Omega. *If he takes the narcotics now, he’ll still be good for another twenty minutes of rational conversation.*

Unfortunately, Watari held firm. “It is late. It may be best for all of us to get some rest.” L ignored the pointed glare the older Alpha gave him before continuing. “Light, we have a guest bedroom here that locks from the inside, and you are welcome to use it. But, please take the pain medication your representative prescribed.”

Light glanced back at L, who simply shrugged. The brunette would find out eventually that Watari could be stubborn about the weirdest things. Like sleep. The Omega nodded and stood.

“Does this mean I have a bedtime too?” Matt taunted from behind.

Light whipped around to snap at him, *(L imagined it would be something snarky about bedtimes and redheads)* but the insult didn’t come. The detective glanced up and, because he was looking for it, caught the disappearing look of agony on the Omega’s face. *Shit. The younger man was in more pain than L had realized. Damn, he’s a good actor.*

L leapt up, allowing the brunette to hide his discomfort from the other two, as he clearly wanted, and started down the hall. “I shall show you where the guest suite is. Matt, tag along.”

The Alpha led his guest to the bedroom near the back of the apartment, complete with cozy blankets, soft pillows, and a double deadbolt. Watari had been busy. Hopefully the Omega didn’t mind a little stereotyping *(except Light probably would)*... and didn’t feel threatened enough to bar the door.

“There is an adjoining bathroom with necessities,” L commented, “If you need anything, just ask
“Why was I needed for this?” Matt griped.

“Get used to it, babysitter,” the Omega grumbled, slipping into the room. “Thank you for setting this up.”

L had been fully prepared to follow Light into the bathroom and stand over him as he took his pain medication, but the younger man very deliberately shut the door on their noses.

“Well, isn’t he a delight…” Matt grouched, turning on his heel. L tilted his head at the door, considering. Delightful wasn’t an inaccurate description… Obnoxiously disruptive yet refreshingly bright, was more precise.

He strolled back to his workspace, stealing the cake off of Watari’s abandoned tea tray.

It annoyed the detective that he hadn’t realized how weary Light actually was. Perhaps it was simply because the brunette was so much fun to rile up, yet still had advantageous observations. It was unfortunate that the Omega was hurt and not also an insomniac. Drugs and sleep were going to severely limit the amount of time L could spend preparing him.

Broken ribs…

It wasn’t that common of an injury. Light had bruised ribs. The man in the first video had had his ribs broken on screen. And the man in the second video had had broken ribs.

And it just so happens that I want to talk to all three of them? The odds of two persons of interest having the same injury were low. The odds of three? Back to Watari and My Fair Lady karaoke probabilities.

There had to be a connection.

None of the three had sought medical treatment. Yet. Though Light was treated without going to the ER… could the other(s) have similar off the grid treatment?
And then L had one of those rare thoughts that brought an immediate halt to the sugar en route to his mouth.

*Could Kira be an Omega?*

No. Solid, resounding no. Except… maybe. An unmated Omega wouldn’t necessarily have to go to the hospital, since mating agencies did their own medical evaluations.

L pulled up a list of the mating agencies across Tokyo. There were sixty seven, each handling around five hundred Omegas every week. Fortunately all their records were pooled in the Japanese Omega Registry, which L had already gained access to while trying to narrow the potential victim pool.

*Alright, now how many Omegas have recently broken ribs?*

The search took less than five seconds. L stared at the screen. Just one.

Light Yagami.

So… if Kira was an unmated Omega, his weekly mating interview was on one of the other six days of the week… *Or he’s taking narcotics in my guest bedroom right now…*

Light was very *obviously* not the man who had rescued Bianca Pillay tonight (unless he had the ability to astral project - which would be highly interesting, but hardly plausible). But, could Light have been the man who rescued Haru Hayashida? Was that how he had known the two rescuers were different men?

Broken ribs was an extraordinarily thin connection, but the perfection of the timing made up for it. *And Light had known Shintaro’s name…*

*As a man with severely bruised ribs…* If Light were Kira, why would he draw unprovoked attention to the fact that they had the same injury? L had used that technique against him on the ride home, implying the Omega was working for the Yggdrassills. Light had done the same thing. Drawn attention to what he *could* have done. So either Light was naturally hypothetical, or he was using the same response to address two cases of suspicion, masking one where he was guilty with
one where he was innocent. Assuming the latter, it was either a very stupid or very smart move…
And Light was very smart. So was Kira…

But even so… *An Omega vigilante?*

L really wanted to find a flaw with this train of logic, but, although it was incredibly unlikely, the only insurmountable block to its feasibility was: *an Omega vigilante?*

He absently flicked his tongue over the tea sodden spoon.

Options A: There was only one man in black. Then, that man must be an Alpha based on the obsession and rape of the fifth Omega victim.

Option B: There were two men in black. The second man was still an Alpha. The first man, however, could be Alpha, Beta, or… Omega.

The possibilities were too vast to come to any concrete deduction. He needed more data.

The detective set an alert for any Omegas reporting chest injuries to their mating agencies in the next week. (For the sake of posterity, L also ran a search for Omegas who had missed their interview tonight - 2,386, most of which were for heats.) If next Thursday, there was still only one unmated Omega with broken ribs, Light Yagami would find himself in an interrogation box.

Along those lines, L would need to interview the guard who had fought with the vigilante during the first raid again. The first round of questioning had only grazed over the infiltrator’s possible dynamic.

L drained his cup in a single gulp. Regardless of the ridiculousness of the idea, it wouldn’t hurt to know more about his attractive guest.

He pulled up Light Yagami’s file to review again, though, perhaps a more personal touch was in order.

“Watari, could you go to Light’s apartment to have a look around?”
There was a short silence.

“L,” the older Alpha rebuked, “He lives in an Omega apartment complex. You may recall that I am an Alpha; I would not be allowed inside.”

“Of course. Matt, could you go to Light’s apartment to have a look around? And do a full work up of his hard drive.”

The redhead perked up. “Does that mean I’m off babysitting duty?”

_Damn Omegas and their baggage…_ L glanced at Watari, who was giving him a stern frown. Leaving an Omega (an unconscious one at that) alone in the company of two Alphas (neither of whom was a relative nor a mate) was illegal (even if one of those Alphas was the world’s greatest detective). But as Watari had said, some exemptions to propriety would have to be made. (Not that the manners of polite society were particularly well impressed on the detective at the best of times, and, right now, he wanted answers about the Omega sleeping in his condo.)

“Light’s asleep, and so can hardly need your chaperoning abilities. Just be back within the hour.”

“Got it.”

The detective turned back to the file open on his screen and sighed. _Perhaps this was how Alphas become obsessed with Omegas…_ As intriguing as the idea of digging into Light Yagami’s potential secrets was, the L had to admit that the Omega’s scent still lingered about the workspace, preventing the detective from accessing his full reasoning capabilities.

He closed the report. The odds of associating Light and Kira in his mind, due to a vested interest in both men, was far higher than them being the same person. Matt could handle investigating the Omega for the time being. At least until the possibility of Light being Kira surpassed 1%.

For now, the detective could work on tracking down the man in black. Or men in black, as Light would have him believe. He queued up the recording of the emergency call from the first rescue.

“Help… Please help…”
There was genuine fear in that whisper.

L sincerely hoped that Light Yagami had never been that scared.

Chapter End Notes

I am so very sorry for the late posting of this chapter, and for my lack of response to comments. December was not a good month for me, as I learned that my dad has cancer, my sister needs heart surgery, and water pipes bursting on the second floor 800 miles away make for a terrible late night phone call.

Anywho, here is this chapter. The last portion was the part I was very iffy on, but L really is that smart, to already be putting the dots together. Let's hope I can keep a cannon Light around, to keep him on his toes.

Comments are much appreciated, and I thank anyone who's stuck around this long waiting.
Of Skipped Breakfasts

Chapter Summary

Leave your characters alone for five hours, and one thing leads to another.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

L wandered into the kitchen looking for sugar. He was livid; Matt wouldn’t let him wake up the Omega yet. It was already 6:00 a.m. and L wanted to talk to Light Yagami now. Contrary to his wishes, according to the Beta, the sleeping beauty was allowed another three hours, before L could pass through the checkpoint in the hallway.

The detective grumbled, sifting through the assorted cakes in the fridge, wanting anything but cold chocolate. Damn you, Light Yagami for ruining that… Watari was yet asleep, so whatever was here, was what he was stuck with. Which was, unfortunately, a lot of chocolate.

Matt had returned with a thorough analysis of the Omega’s apartment. There was nothing. Absolutely no evidence of felonious activities whatsoever. The oddest thing the Beta had noticed was a second bathrobe. Light Yagami’s computer was squeaky clean. If Light was Kira, he didn’t fight crime from his apartment. And he’s a purported shut in…

The chances of Light being Kira were less than 0.1%. Not zero… but not even remotely likely…

He could still sneak out…

L dug to the back of the shelf looking for the cheesecake.

Anyway… After that disappointment, L had spent the next five hours (with a notable half hour break) combing through all available leads on the Yggdrassils and the man/men in black, looking for something exploitable.

Using Light to draw the criminals out was still the best bet. Though it had a lower probability of success, now that the Yggdrassils knew that the Omegas were being protected.
Protection that I promised Soichiro Yagami I would provide. Grr…

L had been prepared for the defensiveness he would develop concerning the Omega. It was something he was equipped to combat, having dealt with Near for extended periods of time over the years.

But unlike his quietest successor, and something the detective had been unprepared for was that, Light Yagami, apparently, had nightmares. Which had completely derailed L’s 2:00 a.m. train of logic, as well as fucked with his sleep schedule. (As in, created a sleep schedule which interfered with his work schedule.) Why the hell did I let an Omega into the apartment?

Ah! Strawberry cheesecake, you’re mine…

The detective satisfactorily took the knife to his breakfast: cold, delicious creaminess to compliment the morning dose of cold, unyielding logic (a perfect antidote to counteract the dangerous, irrational Alpha tendencies that irked him).

Facts: Tokyo was a large city. The Yggdrasills had a research lab somewhere in it, and without new intel, finding it was going to be like a giant game of battleship. But, any abduction team sent for Light (or another of the Omegas) would have a destination. Even if it was a secondary location, putting a marker on a map was a huge leap forward.

Light Yagami was going to be bait.

And making it appear legitimate was actually incredibly simple. All Light would have to do, was sit at the hospital beside his recovering Beta. It was perfectly natural for the brunette to want to be there to support his friend, and it put the Omega out in public, open and exposed, but only risked a reasonable and justifiable amount. Light Yagami would have a protection detail, and, after hours of research, the detective had formulated a plan to get the Yggdrasills to take both notice and advantage of the situation.

And he wanted to persuade Light to it. But the stupid distraction needed to be conscious to hear it…

L slammed the fork drawer, loudly, hoping the echo would summon his three sleeping associates. No such luck, though in Watari’s defense, he was on another floor.
Of course, the detective’s plan needed to either be supported by, or, at the very least, not disrupted by, the actions a certain vigilante.

The disobliging Kira had been silent for day and a half. It wasn’t particularly odd, since his communications with the NPA usually averaged a single untraceable email per week. But considering the hacker had dropped at least one living, breathing kidnappee off at their doorstep and was now wanted for questioning in the murders of five people, L had hoped the man would be a little more proactive.

His silence, though obnoxious, was rationalizable. The vigilante was likely dealing with some seriously damaged bones and/or the loss of his Omega.

He perched on a chair at the dining room table staring down at the photos of the rescued Omegas. They’d added a fifth photo, not that it was getting them any closer to solving the case.

L spared a glance for that last photo, morosely poking at his cheesecake.

The most recently rescued Omega, Bianca Pillay, had taken a turn for the worst in the hospital, around three hours ago. Near had sent an update confirming the drug was being delivered by a synthetic bacteria, but, in her, the infection had progressed too quickly, shutting down her pancreas and liver.

She was dying.

Tragic as it was, her imminent death was still informative. It lent credence to Light’s theory that the man who had rescued the fourth victim was not the same man who had rescued and raped the fifth victim.

_Kira could be innocent._

L speared a slice of strawberry, eyes narrowing.

Innocent of murder and rape, at least. The hacker was still guilty of breaking and entering, debatable assault, and every cyber crime known to man. (In addition to wandering around Beta-less, if he was indeed an Omega...)
But there was a cruel rationale exonerating Kira from last night's events.

The Yggdrassills had an enemy who they couldn’t strike at. Kira was just a name floating around the NPA - until Wednesday night, when they got their first look at the vigilante. They would want to destroy Kira for the damage he’d dealt their operations. Ergo, if the vigilante was caught, on film, murdering five security guards, and an hour later, delivered a raped Omega to the police, the NPA would have no choice but to hunt him. It was an elegant solution to the Yggdrassill’s hacker problem: turn the police and vigilante against each other, and the criminals would have free reign.

All they needed was a single, unnecessary, expendable Omega. A test subject, whom they knew was dying and no longer useful. An Omega named Bianca Pillay.

But, in order to frame Kira, like they could be trying to do, they would need extremely solid intel concerning Kira’s first attack. And to know those details, someone would have to have talked.

All of the security guards from the first rescue were lawyered up, with counsellors who made more per hour than L’s interior designers. Those lawyers could have ferried the specifics of Kira’s attack back to the Yggdrassills. The video from the independent cameras could also have been leaked by the mole in the Bureau.

It was just twisted enough to be possible.

And Light had thought of it first.

Grr… if he wasn’t Kira, that meant he had beat the world’s greatest detective to the truth. And if that were the case, there would be no more chocolate allowed in the condo for the duration of the case.

L wandered back to the workstation, deliberately holding his breath as he passed the corridor leading to where the brunette still slept.

The most recent reports from the Omega protection details were on his main screens. So far, none of the other possible male victims had gone missing in the night. All were all in secure safe houses. There was not much they could do about the potential female victims; two potential candidates had disappeared in the last four hours, one from Canada and one from Turkey. The Alpha reminded himself that, even if he threw a bucket of ice-cold water on Light Yagami right now, there was nothing that could reasonably be accomplished until both the NPA and Yggdrassills were up and running for the day.
I wonder if Kira's awake yet?

Light emerged from the guest suite, aiming straight for the kitchen. Coffee… He’d made the mistake of calling his father, fresh out of the shower, and had to remember how to be polite without caffeine powering his system. It wasn’t easy.

And, aspirin, the drug of choice for the day, meant that the pain in his side was only mildly dulled. (Not that the Alphas needed to know.) Couple that with the knowledge that the Yggdrassils had fashioned a copycat of him, and overall the Omega was feeling rather disagreeable this morning.

His new Beta (Matt? definitely not his real name…) was dozing in a chair just outside his door. The brunette frowned. Had the Beta guarded his room all night? If so, from what? Light crept past, not willing to be deterred from his need for coffee by a sleeping chaperone.

The Omega padded into the gourmet kitchen, hoping that it wasn’t just for show. He beamed when he opened the first cabinet. Colombian dark. Fresh. Perfect. Now for a coffee maker?

The hiss of the faucet and scent of the grounds hid the Alpha’s approach.

“Good morning, Light.”

Light jumped, higher than he’d like to admit, before settling enough to face the world’s greatest detective. You couldn’t have given me three more minutes?

“Good morning… I’m supposed to call you Ryuzaki, right?”

“Yes, it would be best if you did not get in the habit of calling me L.”

The Omega nodded, and turned back to the machine. Watari obviously knows your real identity. The old Alpha probably even knew the real name under the alias ‘L’. Does Matt? Or do you just not want me to know that he knows?
“Light, I would like to discuss last night.”

The brunette stiffened. ‘Last night’ could mean several things, and none of which boded particularly well. *They would have woken him if Kite had died… right?* Or if more impersonations of him had occurred. (The Yggdrassills were clearly making an effort to bring Kira into disrepute. They had never been able to touch him before, but now it was clear exactly how irksome Light had been to them.) The corners of his mouth twitched.

He kept his back to the Alpha as he fished around the cupboards for a coffee cup. “What happened last night?”

“You had a nightmare.”

Light froze, hand still extended towards the shelf. That was not what he’d been expecting. *Oh shit…* He thought he’d broken the habit of yelling in his sleep a while ago…

The brunette quickly recovered himself, taking the red mug and filling it to the brim. As soon as he was sure his face was composed, he turned and brushed past the detective, heading towards the work room.

“And what makes you think that?”

The raven-haired man followed him down the hall, hands in pockets and offered his evidence.

“At 2:03 a.m., I noticed a marked decrease in my ability to focus. As the problem could not be remedied with cake, I realized there had to be another cause for my distraction. At 2:06 a.m., I discovered that I had developed an irrational desire to come check on you. During our discussion earlier last night, you became agitated, as evidenced by the change in your scent. At 2:07 a.m., I realized I was reacting to the same scent, though at much lower potency, and, as there are no substantial threats to you within this apartment, concluded you must be having an unpleasant dream.”

Light frowned. If L knew that much, there was no point in denying it. *Damn, at least I didn’t scream…* Until last night, the only Alpha who Light had ever slept in the same building as, was his father, and Soichiro already knew the circumstances surrounding his son’s night terrors - and was fully read in on the ‘this never happened’ protocol.
“I apologize if my subconscious upset you. It should be possible to avoid in the future, if I take a minor scent blocker prior to retiring.”

The Omega hoped that was enough to end the conversation; it really was none of L’s business what went on in his head. He himself pretended the dreams didn’t exist; and, when he was conscious, they didn’t.

Light reached the workroom and regarded the available seating options with distaste. Haven’t you ever heard of cushions? He eventually gave up looking for something comfortable and went to sit at the chair he’d occupied last night, the one next to L’s workspace.

ViCAP?

Light’s eyes widened as he took in the information on the monitors. Of course L would have access to every government database on the planet. Hmm, I wonder…

The detective perched on his own chair, clearly not bothered by the lack of padding, and stared at the brunette with his hands on his knees.

“Do such nightmares occur often?”

Light glared at the Alpha. Apparently, the interrogation was not over. “No,” he lied, “Though I imagine they will be more frequent so long as the Yggdrassills are after me.”

The charcoal eyes blinked owlishly at him. “If you are af—”


Light spun in his chair to face the monitors, trying yet again to end this discussion. He focussed instead on the untapped data in front of him. Those FBI firewalls are tricky. I don’t suppose L would be too keen on sharing this access… “Were there any developments in the case while I was asleep? I assume from the dark circles under your eyes that you didn’t sleep last night.”
The Omega glanced back to the screens. Based on the lists of names, L was cross referencing the NPA personnel against hospital employees. And both lists against known violent criminals. *Interesting line of thought...*

“On the contrary, I slept for a half hour. Which brings us back to the discussion of your nightmare.”

*For the love of… It’s a bloody dream. I can’t help it and it doesn’t relate to the case.* Light had never been comfortable with the fact that he couldn’t control his own subconscious. (Though, since becoming Kira, the dreams had greatly reduced in length and intensity. There was just something extremely soothing about watching criminals disappear into the depths of prison, never to be seen again.)

*Drop it…*

The Alpha didn’t heed his glare. “Matt and I were unable to wake you from it.”

Light jerked around, coffee sloshing dangerously. “Wait, what?”

*They tried to wake him?* That meant they’d been in his room last night and he hadn’t known. Light felt his skin crawl.

“You had a nightmare, a highly distressing one. We couldn’t wake you.”

Two people had stood right next to him while he was unconscious? That was disturbing. Though the Alpha in front of him didn’t seem to find anything wrong with the situation.

*They were only trying to help.* Light was not a particularly heavy sleeper, for obvious reasons, but… *Definitely turning those deadbolts tonight.*

“It was probably the oxycodone. It must have knocked me out.”

L ran his thumb across his bottom lip. “Yes, that is what we concluded as well. However, I feel obligated to inform you that, since you could not be woken, I made the decision to help you in another way.”
Oh fuck. “How?” Do not tell me you injected me with something while I was asleep…

“Emotional stabilization through physical juxtaposition.”

“What!?” Colombian dark roast slopped to the floor, and Light was suddenly on his feet, torn between lunging at the Alpha’s throat or putting some highly necessary distance between them.

L didn’t seem phased, by either the hot liquid or the vibrating Omega, and responded calmly. “As you know, I am an Alpha. Omegas almost universally respond positively to physical contact with us—”

“Yes, I understand biology!” Light snapped, “You cuddled me!?”

“Technically yes, though the term cuddling implies a certain lack of impersonalness. I put my arms around you, and held you until your nightmare passed. Incidentally, that was the half hour of sleep I mentioned before.” The raven-haired man actually sounded annoyed about that.

“You know that’s illegal, right?”

The raven’s lips twitched. “Light, I assure you I am well versed in all facets of the law. In cases of life and death, extraordinary measures are allowed. We could not wake you. If you had not settled within five minutes of me holding you, Watari would have called an ambulance.”

“If it only took five minutes to calm me, then why did you get a half hour of sleep?” Presumably while still touching me… Oh, I am so hacking your system for this. And not feeling a damn bit guilty about it.

“I tried to pull away on three separate occasions. Each time you gasped and pulled me back. I took the opportunity to rest, and when I woke twenty eight minutes later, I was able to extricate myself without disturbing you.”

“I’m disturbed now.”
Light hated being touched (at least when he was conscious) - screw whatever Omegan biology dictated. Shaking hands was his limit. The only two people on Earth who were allowed to hug him were his mother and Sayu, and even that was pushing it.

“Your reaction suggests that you do not enjoy physical contact, but is contradicted by your fundamental biology. Tell me Light, how do you maintain a healthy lifestyle without touch?”

Illegally…

“My lifestyle in general is none of your business!”

(The same supplier who sold his scent blockers carried a line of experimental uppers, that had been designed for neglectful Alphas, who didn’t want to deal with their mate’s clinginess. Kira had repurposed the technology. And then tracked any other consumers of the product, to report to Omega Social Services.) About once every three months, when he’d started to feel shaky, Light chemically alleviated his dependence on human contact. And as long as Rem’s blood tests continued to indicate passable hormone levels, there was no reason to change his policy on personal space. As in, don’t fucking touch me…

L ran his thumb along his lips, dark eyes thoughtful.

“Does your displeasure stem from the fact that I am an Alpha?”

Light didn’t deign to reply.

L took in his stony silence and shrugged. “If it eases your conscious, Matt was present for the duration of the event.”

The Omega ground his teeth. Yes, someone watching you molest me makes it all better…

“No, Ryuzaki,” Light gritted out, “That makes it worse.”

The detective frowned, not liking the Omega’s reaction and probably wanting to cuddle him better again.
Light suppressed the shudders wracking his frame. It had happened and it was over. There were more important issues at hand.

*They had only been trying to help.* And L had been honest about what had he had done. (Light was still going to cross-reference the detective’s story against Matt’s and Watari’s and make for damn certain that was *all* the Alpha had done.)

And it sure as hell wasn’t going to happen again.

He could let it go for now.

*And then upload that backdoor and own your ass…*

(A while back, the vigilante had learned how handy it could be to have just such a code in easy reach; all his phones had a variation of the program, even his actual, personal phone. Though in that case it was even more partitioned and encrypted than usual.)

The brunette took a deep breath. “I would appreciate it if no one touches me again.” He took slow steps back to his seat. “Regardless, there are more pressing issues. Did anything relating to the case happen last night?”

The detective nodded and turned back towards the monitors. Light gingerly took his seat, mourning the lost coffee soaking into the carpet.

The sooner this case was over, the sooner the Omega could go back to his normal life, where there were comfortable chairs and personal boundaries.

*Soon to be complete with ViCAP access…*

“*What do the Yggdrasills want? What’s the end goal here?*”
L let the Omega change the subject back to the matters he should have been focussing on anyway. Light was clearly in denial, and risking his own health by eschewing basic biological needs. But L could tell Chief Yagami to get him a therapist later.

They had work to do.

“Overall, this appears to be a desperate move by the Tokyo branch of the Yggdrassill organization to rebuild their reputation, after the arrest of their CEO,” L replied, clicking rapidly through the old evidence. *Kira’s doing… grr…* “Successful testing and marketing of a new drug would both be lucrative and reaffirm their control in the region. The Omega abductions are to obtain test subjects for such a drug trial.”

The Omega’s amber eyes narrowed. “So they’re not selling the Omegas?”

“No. At least not until the drug is proven effective.”

“How do you know this?” Light demanded. The younger man didn’t seem to have any faith at all in L’s ability to do his job. *You do realize I am the best at this, right? A little trust might be warranted…*

“The Yggdrassills are an international organization with many independent sects. In the process of solving six unrelated murders by a branch in Paris, I found several references to the new drug, not yet on the market. They are calling it XoXo.”

He stood and led the Omega to long dining table. “Through several of my sources, I was able to locate a biochemist in Hong Kong on the Yggdrassill’s payroll. We raided his lab and found the first test subject,” L pointed at a picture on the left. “Since then, we’ve learned that the primary lab is here in Tokyo, where they send the Omegas for final testing.”

The detective swept his hand to emphasize the other photos in the line.

“These are the four Omegas that have been recovered in the last two days. All five victims have had the same chemical in their bloodstreams, through we are still trying to determine its actual purpose.”

The brunette leaned forward to straighten the images, studying each victim carefully. *Neurotic,*
aren’t you?

Light straightened. “It would have to be more than just a prolonged high; there’s plenty of drugs already available for Alphas to keep Omegas addicted and compliant. Although, Tokyo’s blackmarket is known for it’s Betas, not Omegas. They could be trying to up the quality of their goods in the eyes of potential buyers.”

*How exactly do you know that, Light?* L reevaluate the possibility of the Omega working for a criminal organization (2.4%). Or being Kira (0.3%). The brunette glanced up, and smirked that arrogant grin of his.

“Like most Asian populations, the Japanese have statistically lower numbers of twins and triplets. There are only a handful of traceable lineages where that is not the case, mine being one of them. Alphas who buy Omegas usually only want them as breeding stock, so Japanese Omegas have never been exceptionally popular on the blackmarket.”

L ran his thumb across his lips. *All very true, and something the police chief’s son would know…* “One of my people is analyzing the chemical now. His preliminary results suggest that XoXo allows the inducement of heats.”

“There are other drugs for that too,” Light retorted.

L let his black eyes rake over the younger man. *So quick…* “I had similar ideas, though we have no solid proof of that XoXo is actually capable of anything yet.”

The Omega frowned, coming to the same conclusions L had. *How many test subjects would it take to get a drug that works?*

“So what is the plan?” Light demanded, folding his arms.

*Seriously, little, nightmare-ridden Omega… Stop challenging me.*

L ignored his annoyance and focussed on the table. “From the lab in Hong Kong we know that there were eight initial test subjects. Five of those have been recovered. However, three more Omegas have gone missing since. One male, three days ago, and two female, last night.”
Light nodded, running his fingers across the fourth Omega’s picture. “So we need to find six Omegas, the researchers behind the drug development, and enough evidence to dismantle the part of the organization funding the operation...”

>You make it sound like a checklist. “A succinct summation.”

Light frowned. “How do we know they won’t relocate their lab?”

The detective had already considered that possibility back at the beginning of the case, but, having seen some of the inner workings of large, traditional packs, had concluded Tokyo was the final destination. *They could have picked Paris or New York, or someplace with a healthy supply of pastry...*

“I suspect the facility is immobile, not because of the expense, but because of the pack politics. The Tokyo branch of the family can’t risk moving or aborting their operations without looking weak in the eyes of the rest of the organization.”

The brunette fell intensely silent, and L used the moment to retrieve his sweetened tea. *What have you thought of?* Light was still contemplative as the detective slouched back to the table. *Anytime now...*

“Three of the Omega’s were being shipped in freight containers right?” Light asked slowly, “What about the other five? They could be in containers of their own right now. Can’t you check all incoming containers and cross-reference those purchased by the same company that paid for the ones you found?”

*Already did so. But the Omega kept talking.*

“For that matter, if the Omegas are just arriving in Tokyo now, wouldn’t some of the scientists studying them also just be arriving? Can you check immigration records for anyone with a biochemistry or pharmaceutical background entering the country within the last month?”

*Again, already doing so. If you didn’t need sleep so much, you might have thought of this six hours ago when I did.*

“I am already doing both those things. In between cuddling you.”
The Alpha abruptly turned, leaving the Omega frozen in shock, as he meandered back to his workstation.

*Perhaps Kira wouldn’t mind being cuddled.* After L arrested him.

“You have the NPA under surveillance?” Light’s eyes widened, looking at the windows L had just pulled up. He could see his father’s desk, complete with his father sitting behind it. Additionally, there were feeds showing every other office and bullpen in the station.

(Kira also had tabs on the police, but he mostly relied on written reports and the occasional webcam peep.) By the looks of things, the detective had a much more comprehensive window into the bureau. *Impressive…*

The dark-haired Alpha continued munching on the tiny grahams, oblivious to the appreciation of the brunette. “They agreed to it.”

Light ground his teeth. *Must be nice to be the world’s greatest detective.* “You’re lucky the Japanese government likes you.”

“Mmm?” Black eyes flicked over to his face, before returning to his monitor. “Yes, I suppose I am.”

Light didn’t even bother to hide the roll of his eyes. “So what is the goal here?”

“Justice.”

The Omega choked on his coffee. (Second cup so far.) *He did not just say that.*

However, it seemed L found the ridiculous, single word answer sufficient and had no intention of elaborating, having gone back to alternating between clicking and cookies.
“That’s not what I meant,” Light clarified, “What is your plan for achieving justice?”

L turned to regard the Omega with the same blank mask for a quick second. You do have a plan, don’t you?

The Alpha returned to screen and brought of a map of a… hospital? “You are going to act as bait and draw out the Yggdrassill’s extraction team. The goal will be to arrest those agents they send to abduct you.”

Oh for the love of… “Obviously,” Light gritted out, “What specifically are you asking me to do?”

He got the distinct impression that the detective was enjoying teasing him. But this time L gave him a full answer.

“Matt will drive you to a garage not far from here. You will switch vehicles. Watari will continuously track you via traffic surveillance and GPS. When he is sure that you are not being followed, Matt will drive you to the hospital. Since he is only acting as your temporary chaperone, he will leave you with the Beta NPA officers your father sends to meet you at the entrance. From this point forward, the Yggdrassills will know your location-”

Wait… how will they…? Light’s brain supplied the answer before L could continue. No! The younger man seized the back of the Alpha’s chair and forcibly spun it to make the detective face him.

He ignored the sharp gasp from his recently-awakened nanny on the other side of the room.

“That’s your plan!!?”

The detective cocked his head. “Was that not clear?”

“The security detail!? That’s how the Yggdrassills will know where to find me!? You’re going to make sure one of them is a corrupt cop on the pack’s payroll!”
And how the hell did you find out who it was? Kira had been trying for months to unearth the mole that Yggdrassils had burrowed into his father’s office. The problem was there was more than one, and they were excellent at covering each other’s tracks beneath the base levels of incompetency that plagued the NPA.

“You are correct,” L replied annoyedly, “There is no need to yell. Now, as I was saying-”

“I know what you’re going to say!” the Omega interrupted, outrage trumping annoyance. “You’re going to say that you’re not going to tell me which one is dirty.”

The Alpha ran his thumb across his lips, seemingly surprised that Light had already figured it out. “It will equalize your behavior towards all three officers,” he countered, “If you were to know which one was going to betray you, the probability of our strategy being uncovered would increase by 150%.”

“No! You are not sending me in blind!”

“Informing you of the mole’s identity will put you greater danger.”

That’s bullshit and you know it. “And what about the two honest men? This puts them at risk too.”

“Yes, that is in their job description,” the detective muttered, clicking so that three officer’s photos filled the screen. Ukita. Ido. Guren. Light wanted to punch something (a disturbingly frequent desire, since he’d met L); he knew all three of them. And L claims one of them is corrupt... Fuck.

“But I will know that the Yggdrassils are coming,” Light argued. He thought back to his research on the family. The Yggdrassils have always favored a professional five man assault team... Two good cops and an injured Omega was not going to slow them down one bit. Not that three good cops would change much...

“The officers will know an attack is possible, as that is why they have protection detail in the first place. The degree to which each of you knows, is irrelevant.”

Light snarled under his breath, tightening his grip on the coffee mug. Alright, L, I’ll figure out which one is dirty on my own. “Fine. The dirty cop rats me out. Thugs come. Are you trying to get me abducted or not?”
The Alpha cocked his head. “Do you want to be abducted?”

Are you serious?

“In general? No!” Light snapped, “But… if it means the Tokyo branch of the Yggdrassills can be shut down, then yes. Though I would prefer not to die in the process.”

Translation: if you can develop a plan where I am only kidnapped for an hour and do not become some asshole’s chew toy for the rest of my life, I’ll consider it.

Light took a deep gulp of the scorching coffee.

“Your enthusiasm for justice is encouraging,” L remarked blandly - was that sarcasm? -, turning back to his monitors, “However, allowing them to seize you is not something I can allow. To do so, would simply get them one step closer to achieving their goal. Therefore, I would prefer that they are unsuccessful in their abduction of you.”

Light glared at the detective. Are you speaking as a lawman or as an Alpha?

“I will have several teams on site, ready to move in the moment the Yggdrassills make their move. The most likely outcome will be that you are manhandled a bit before the criminals are arrested. Can you accept that as a probable scenario?”

Light glared at the detective and nodded. L ran a thumb across his lips, accepting the Omega’s consent, and then continued, “Regardless, we will prepare you for the worst-case scenario. One where they evade our trap and succeed in truly abducting you.”

The vigilante nodded. That would really suck… But if it happens, I can use it to get inside their network… oh, that would be so much fun… though I’d probably too high to do much… Could be worth it, if I don’t die… Still, would really suck...

L ignored his inner monologue. “If they do take you, you can’t act like this.”
Amber eyes flashed up to challenge onyx ones. Light ground his teeth, not liking what the detective was implying. “Act like what?”

“Proud. To them you are a sex doll, nothing more. If you talk back to them the way you talk back to me, they will beat you. They may beat you anyway.”

It was still shocking to the brunette that the Alpha was not concealing the ugly truth. *Though aren’t I just Yggdrasill-bait to you? Not much of a difference.*

“It’s more likely that they will drug me unconscious,” Light replied. The Omega from the docks hadn’t been beaten, just drugged and starved. *They need me… for now.*

“While that is true, you need to be prepared for all forms of abuse. Physical, mental, emotional. They will threaten your family. They will touch you inappropriately. Anything they can do to coerce you, they will do.”

*Yes, I know. That is why I’m going to rip them apart.* Light had seen the results of the Yggdrasill’s handiwork. While he could have told L with absolute certainty that he knew what he was getting into, that would involve a discussion of Kira-related activities.

(Curiously, the detective had made no mention of the vigilante. It was becoming more than slightly suspicious. *He’s either jealous or waiting to see if I’ll let something slip…*)

Regardless, Light feigned a nervous swallow, just to seem normal. “At least they’re not going to cuddle me.”

Light regretted the words as soon as they were out of his mouth. Though L’s blank mask didn’t so much as flinch, the Omega felt the immediate need to apologize. “I’m sorry, that wasn’t meant to sound so harsh.”

L stared at him for a moment, and Light uncomfortably retreated into his coffee mug.

“Light, I know you already answered this, but I need to ask one more time. Are you sure you want to do this?”
The brunette studied his lap. The image of the Omega chained to the floor of the crate filled his mind’s eye; it was quickly succeeded by the images of the three Omegas climbing out of Shishio Yggdrassils trunk, and then that was replaced by images of the drugs, transcripts of the lies, ballistics on the weapons… The answer was extraordinarily simple.

“Yes.”

The detective nodded. Then he gestured to Watari. The older Alpha picked up a case and came to join them.

“Light, we’re going to put two trackers in you,” the gentleman explained, opening the case. “One in your arm, the other in your calf. The one in your arm will be constitutively active. If it goes offline, we activate the one in your calf. If that were to happen, we will immediately send agents to retrieve you, no matter the circumstances.”

Light studied the injection device with distaste. Why does everyone insist on stabbing me with something? He turned his head as Watari swabbed his arm. He felt the cool press of the needle against his skin and quickly asked the detective the first random question he could.

“And what do you want me to do while I’m waiting for them to make their-” Ow… Fuck! It was all he could do not to whimper at the sting of his new, high-tech collar.

He was too immersed in the unpleasant sensation to immediately register the growling filling the air.

“Are you alright, Light?” Watari asked. Light sucked in a shallow breath through gritted teeth, glancing around for the source of the growling. Well Watari’s behaving like an adult, so…

Apparently, it was the younger Alpha making the scene, severely disliking the sight of an Omega in pain. Oh bite me. You can growl when he’s shooting a chip into your arm…

Light composed himself enough to glance up at Watari, who also looked concerned (though not to the point of silly, aggressive displays), and convey his okayness. “Calf next?”

“Yes, if you could roll your left pant leg up…” Watari instructed.
The Omega turned back to L. “You were going to tell me what I’m pretending to do while luring them out?”

The Alpha’s black eyes were glued on the second syringe Watari was leveling at his leg, but he answered the question. “You will focus on staying alive. I know you will want to do more-”

Click.

Oww… The second tracker burned a bit less—probably fewer nerve endings, but still stung like a bitch.

“-but do not take any unnecessary risks. If you get yourself killed, we lose our link to the laboratory and any other Omegas they have hostage,” L finished.

“Understood,” Light answered, hiding his discomfort as he unrolled his pant leg.

L stood and walked towards the door.

“I would also like you to wear a com in your ear so that I provide direct instruction if necessary.”

Essentially, you want to control my every move… It was going to make subterfuge more difficult, but Light was always up for a challenge.

“Alright, detective. Let’s do this.”

Chapter End Notes

Thank you everyone who has come back to this fic! The support in the last chapter was amazing. I’m working on responding to all the comments, because I read them all, love them, read them again, and love them more; just fell a little behind.

And now L knows a little bit more about Light. As in, he knows about that red bathrobe. And some other stuff, non-Kira related stuff.

Please call me out if my characterizations fly off the handle. I had several moments of
doubt before posting this chapter, debating on if I wanted the whole thing rewritten. As for Light's nightmares, I defend by saying Batman had nightmares too. The only difference, is Batman didn't smell like chocolate.
Proper Bedside Manner

Chapter Summary

In which Watari has one line of sass. But it's a good one.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Over sixty years ago, researchers proved it a biologically imperative for Omegas to maintain high levels of physical contact. Historically, society believed that this need could only be met by an Alpha mate. Only the most progressive communities accepted the use of Beta surrogates, and only so long as the dependence was temporary, until the Omega was properly mated.

No one disagreed that sufficient physical contact was mandatory an Omega’s immunity, resilience, and overall general wellbeing.

The primary point of contention was how ubiquitously the trait was abused. So much so, that, since their basic needs had not been being met for centuries, the Omega Dynamic became stereotyped as sickly. An Alpha mate could quite tightly control his Omega’s health by withholding this care. Even in consensual relationships, there was a prevailing ignorance of what the Omega needed to be truly healthy. Common knowledge dictated that an ailing Omega simply needed to be fucked better.

It took the better half of a decade for the Omega Civil Rights Movement to disprove this tenant.

One of the fiercest battles fought during the unrest was to determine if Omegas could even survive without the constant, physically dominant presence of an Alpha mate. Before the Reconstruction, on the extremely rare occasion that an Omega kidnapping case was solved and led to the removal of the Omega from the Alpha’s custody, the Omega would almost always develop an abandonment-driven immunodeficiency syndrome (93% lethal within the first year). Opposition to the Movement argued that the number of Omega deaths would skyrocket, and freer Omegas would prostitute themselves out of desperation for this contact. They claimed that it was safer and healthier for them to be mated the moment they presented. Supporters of Omega independence presented statistics of their own; exhibiting hundreds of thousands of cases where Alphas had misused this imperative to enslave their mates, withholding touch until the Omega became obedient. Or sickened enough to become obedient. Or died.

The Civil Rights Movement launched a research initiative, to demonstrate that these physical needs could be satiated by any human contact, not just that of a mate, or even that of an Alpha.
Omegas who spent significant time in the company of other Omegas or Betas were shown to be just as healthy as those with caring Alpha mates.

In response, Alpha-Omega purists released their own studies, showing how Omega-Omega relationships were dangerous, inducing a harem mentality. In the Alpha community, as the scent of multiple Omegas, particularly that of their mate with another Omega, was ‘maddening’. The concept of an Alpha’s ‘rut’ had long since been disavowed, but modern evidence showed that the scent or sight of two Omegas sharing physical contact universally drove Alphas to sexual arousal. From which paired Omegas could be used to bait and torture an Alpha. (Two weeks after the term ‘maddening’ was coined, riots overtook nearly every world capital, as Omegas showed the globe how ‘maddening’ enslavement was.)

And then, to undermine that ideology, the Movement demonstrated that the Omegan need for physical contact was purely asexual.

In an infamous Canadian study, eight blind pairs of strange Omegas were placed in an isolated environments, for three months, with no one but each other. Notably, to address the sexual undertones of the debate, the Omegas were nude. In all eight cases, after the first week, the Omegas spent every night cuddled together. Eventually, their relationships evolved, incorporating everything from kissing to bubble baths, but never, in three months, did any of the sixteen Omegas engage in sexual intercourse. Not even during each other’s heats. The final physical examinations of the Omegas showed them all to be as healthy, if not healthier, than when the experiment began.

The Civil Rights Movement argued that the study proved that, while Omegas could choose to mate with an Alpha, they did not need one; the anti-Reconstruction dismissed it as pornography.

In the end, the law decided that mated Omegas had the right to seek platonic, physical contact from Beta councillors, should their Alphas neglect them. However, unmated Omegas were solely and legally reliant on their immediate families for physical contact. (Orphaned Omegas could be assigned a ‘family’, but due to the lack of familial instinct, those Omegas were almost always raped during the first month.) Within society as a whole, Alphas were forbidden from anything more than a simple handshake with an Omega. Due to their own rights movement, where they sought recognition as Alphas’ equals, Betas were bundled together under the same restrictions; though, unlike Alphas, non-sexual transgressions were politely overlooked. And the only times an Omega could offer another Omega physical comfort, mated or unmated, was in the security of a stay house, beneath their mates’ lustful gazes, or in obstruction of mortal peril.

L alternated between screening profiles of biotech personal inside Japan and clicking refresh on window where the Bureau of Omega Protection and Privacy would upload the unsealed case files.
Matt and Light had left the condo twelve minutes ago, and the detective was already regretting letting the brunette out of the house. Light Yagami was one of those people who needed to undergo scrutiny at all times, or trouble would inevitably follow. He was also fun to annoy.

Zzz... zzz... zzz...

The detective glared at his phone, before pinching it open and holding it to his ear. *Near had better not be calling for what I think he is...*

“Yes?”

“The fifth Omega died,” the teen’s voice responded, coolly, “I am coming to Tokyo.”

Called it... “Matt is already on site. The risk of assassination increases by twenty two percent for each of us that is present. We do not need unrelated criminal activity muddying the case.”

“They’re synthesizing an aetheric stimulant. I need to analyze a fresh sample. I am coming to Tokyo. I will see you in nine hours.”

The call ended.

The raven-haired Alpha let the phone fall back to the desk. *Grr...* While Near’s presence wasn’t necessarily detrimental towards solving the case, another strong-willed Omega was not going to improve his deductive reasoning. And, should Light and Near decide to sync their stubbornness, the resulting headache would likely exceed the dynamic range of his sugar buffering.

*Speaking of sugar...* L dropped another cube into his tea, wide, dark eyes never leaving the screen.

The clock turned to 10:00 a.m. and the Alpha smiled. He dialed a new number, waiting expectantly for someone to answer. He’d waited twenty-four hours to dial this number, all so he could speak to Makoto Narumi.

A young female voice answered the call.
“Hello. FREY’s Famous Pizza. What can I get you?”

“Yes, this is Detective Yagami, with the NPA. I have some questions regarding an order that was placed Thursday night. I need to speak with whoever took the call for delivery at 1:30 a.m.”

L heard the subtle intake of breath and the distinct sound of a hand covering the microphone. *Probably waving frantically for a manager…*

“Oh… um… Lemme check.”

Some ungodly hold music came on the line and, since he wasn’t worried about the straight-laced pizza boy making a run for it, L turned his attention back to the screen on the left. The conversation from the SUV confirmed that neither Beta nor Omega was enjoying the other’s company. Light was clearly determined to wring every detail of last night from the Beta, though Matt seemed to be holding his own, being on the wrong side of interrogation right now. (Though the redhead’s fingers did twitch quite often, probably itching for his cigarettes).

“Uh, Detective?”

The girl was back. L could hear some labored breathing from at least two people. *To be expected when the police come calling…*

“Mmmm.”

“Makoto Narumi worked that shift. He’s here; lemme put him on.”

L’s watched the girl hand the phone to her companion. In the time it took to change hands, L had already reopened the ‘Narumi, Makoto’ file on his central screen and was halfway through it. *Beta, college student, works two jobs, normal…*

*And possibly the only person to have heard Kira’s real voice.*

“Detective?”
“Yes, Mr. Makoto. Can you describe the caller from Thursday night?”

“Yes, Mr. Makoto. Can you describe the caller from Thursday night?”

“Um, well, he called and asked for two pizzas. Wanted them delivered to the,” some papers rustled, probably Narumi checking the delivery log, “Pondu Shipping Yard. I’m the only one who works the late shift Thursdays, so I did the delivery too. I remember when I got there, I called the number he gave me and he said to ring the gate, but that guy there told me to get lost. Said nobody had ordered pizza. I figured some kid was playing a prank. It happens every now and then.”

_Prank indeed, Kira._

“Can you describe the voice?”

“Um… He was a dude. Sounded normal…”

“Would you recognize it if you heard it again?”

“Oh, um… Maybe? It was late and I wasn’t really-”

“Tell me if it is the voice that placed the order.”

The detective pressed play. “Off camera, we can make several deductions. If I had been in that SUV, they would have needed a way to transport me. Most likely, there was a third accomplice driving a getaway vehicle…” L listened carefully, waiting for any sign of recognition.

“Maybe? I’m not really sure. He might’ve sounded kinda similar. Is that true though? All that stuff about accomplices-”

“Thank you for your time. Someone from my office will be in touch with you again later today.”

The Alpha disconnected the call and frowned. He sent a fast email to the real Soichiro Yagami, instructing him to have a detective over to the pizzeria to get a full transcript of the call. _Kinda similar…_ Not the most definitive of IDs, but he’d worked with less. At the very least, he could
had a baseline for pitch and accent. And custody of that baseline.

*Speaking of which*…

It was 10:09 a.m. Light’s unsealed case records had appeared.

*So Light, is this where your nightmares come from?*

Light sharply scrutinized the redhead next to him.

He’d determined that L was either ignoring or deliberately hiding any information related to Kira. Perhaps the computer whiz would be a bit more forthcoming.

Unfortunately, he was wasting precious time getting Matt to confirm L’s story concerning the events of the night past.

*It was necessary… it was necessary… it was necessary…*

“If it makes you feel any better, I have a pounding headache from where he slammed me against the wall,” the Beta answered, glaring sideways at the Omega, like it was his fault.

*Well my ribs are pounding, so tough…* Light glanced away from his chauffeur. Matt, for the most part, seemed to be a better driver than L, gripping the wheel like a normal human being.

“Why did he slam you against the wall?” the brunette asked, feigning curiosity. He could already fathom why. It was obvious: the Alpha had acted impetuously, ridiculously assuming the Omega was in need of his protection.

“Because I when I went to shake your shoulder, you panicked, and he defended you.”
Have you all taken crazy pills? “You should never have let him into the room. Even if they bitch about it, actually seeing an Omega is what sets them off. I’m surprised he didn’t throttle you the first time you pulled me away.”

The Beta grumbled something unintelligible, probably derogatory to both Alphas and Omegas.

The redhead had corroborated the Alpha’s story, so Light was prepared to let it drop. He thought they were done with the topic and began preparing to pump the nanny for other information. But after a short moment, it turned out, just like his boss, the Beta seemed to feel the need to get on Light’s last nerve.

“How long you had them?” Matt asked.

Light might have known exactly what he was talking about, but that didn’t mean he was going to acknowledge it. Seriously people, boundaries. “Excuse me?”

“The nightmares. How long?”

Amber eyes flashed. “That would be none of you concern.”

“My skull begs to differ.” Matt paused, taking a deep breath. “Mine started when I was thirteen.”

Huh? “I’m sorry?”

The redhead rolled his eyes, taking the exit for the hospital. “I work for L. We see some of the most messed up shit there is on this planet. You Omegas see the same shit, just from the other side. How long?”

“...”

As far as Light was concerned, this conversation was over. Time to get some information.

“How did you find the other Omegas?” Light asked abruptly.
The redhead frowned, not looking away from the road. “What do you mean?”

“How did you find them? More specifically, I’d like to know how you’re going to find me if this plan fails miserably.”

*Seeing as how I’m the one who actually found most of them, you’d better have a better plan than expecting me to rescue myself… (And knowing what little he did of L, the world’s greatest detective was probably seething about being second best right now.)*

“The first one L excavated from a hole in Hong Kong, by arresting the biochemist experimenting on him in connection to an unrelated case.”

“And the others?”

*This is the part where you reveal Kira’s existence and explain that you understand his methods well enough to get him out when he himself is hostage… Although, the fact that L had made the jump from one Yggdrassill crime to another was impressive; as Kira had learned, the bastards were very, very good at dissolving ties to any operation that came to light.*

“The NPA recovered two of them and the other two, as you know, were mysteriously delivered to the station.”

Light grit his teeth. *Liar.*

“You’re telling me the NPA, the organization the Yggdrassills have solidly infiltrated, is finding these Omegas before L does?” Light was almost sorry the irritating Alpha wasn’t around to hear that. “I am screwed, aren’t I?”

“No you’re not,” Matt griped. “And L only took this case thirty-six hours ago. Have a little faith.”

*Huh? Thirty-six hours is all? That was surprising. Though the Beta was offering very little evidence to support his claims of competency. Do they really suspect me that much? Or do they just want to save face?*
“You sure about that?” Light challenged, “Then I will ask again: with technical precision, explain how is L going to find me if everything goes wrong.”

“Damn, you’re paranoid. L is the best at this. Ryuzaki, Watari, and myself are are pretty damn good ourselves. We will find you. And we’ll do it before K-”

The Omega hissed at the loud crackle in his ear.

“Light, if you were going to question my ability to protect you, you should have done so before leaving the safe house. Rest assured, even if everything goes sideways, I will find you.”

Of course L would have the vehicle bugged.

The brunette clenched his jaw. You stopped him just before he said ‘Kira’, didn’t you? So you actually are hiding my existence from myself? Light quickly swallowed an exasperated laugh; it would be all too easy to outmaneuver L in that particular game. Any information he happened to drop about Kira, could convincingly be laid to rest at the feet of the NPA. It was nice to have NPA chief as a father. Alright, I suppose I can kick your ass at this too…

But that didn’t change the fact that he was going to be personally targeted by some of the most dangerous criminals on the planet. Light threw his head back against the cushion.

“You had better be as good as you think you are.”

The Omega climbed out of the vehicle under the carport of the Takanawa emergency room. L had only activated the com in his ear seven minutes ago, and Light was already fantasizing about murdering the man.

The world’s greatest detective wouldn’t shut up.

“Explain to the staff that your Beta is in critical condition, then go directly to Kite Gingsu’s room. You should act more like a grieving Omega. Even if you are emotionally stable, you should make it look like you’re distraught. Try crying. Though there may be time for that later, as you will be
staying for at least seven hours-”

Light missed a step and had to stop himself from stumbling through the door.

Wait, what? The detective was going to leave him in this medical hell for seven hours?! The Omega glanced towards the nearest security camera, baring his teeth. He mouthed the words ‘shut the hell up’ three times in quick succession.

“That was hardly necessary and you risk blowing your cover. Now-”

Light ignored him and pulled out his phone.

“Light, what are you doing? You do not need to call anyone-”

“Hi Dad, I made it to the hospital.”

Light let his voice hitch, like he was too distressed to believe what was happening. L was still ranting in his left ear, and the brunette focused on only hearing what was being replied on his right.

“Light, I don’t like you being out in public like this.” His father sounded exhausted.

“Dad… it’s Kite…” Light took an audible gulp of air. “I have to be here. At least until he wakes up.”

There was a brief pause from the Chief. “Alright son. Your protection detail is there, right?”

The brunette scanned the crowd and saw the three plainclothes advancing towards him. One of these men is not like the others… Light’s eyes narrowed. And one of you is going to rot in prison, very, very soon.

“Yes, they’re here,” Light hesitated, gearing up for the actual reason he had called his father. “Um dad? I know it’s a pain, but could you have someone bring me a laptop? I just… I have to be here
but I can’t let myself think about it and if I focus on work… then maybe it’ll be okay…”

He trailed off, waiting to see if his father was going to give in.

“Of course, Light. You should focus on staying positive. I’ll have Matsuda stop by your place since he’s still registered with the complex.”

Good Alpha dad… A simple laptop solved so many issues. Kira could get back online, Light could ignore the fact that he was trapped in a hospital, the man in his ear could go to hell… Though, I will have to make sure he isn’t looking over my shoulder. The detective had probably snuck at least one camera into the recovery room.

“Thanks dad. I’ll text you later.”

He slid the phone back into his pocket, just as the three officers arrived. The brunette knew they didn’t mean to, but they were essentially circling him. Not usually a problem, but right now, with one of them a known enemy, the Omega was more than a little on edge.

“I could have sent you with a laptop if you wanted to check stocks all day. Though you should not allow yourself to be distracted from the mission at hand,” L grumbled.

Light smoothed his already pristine shirt, wondering how the detective knew the contents of his conversation. Did he hide a mic on me or bug my phone? Or was he that good of a lip reader?Regardless, it was an expected move, and the brunette simply tuned Alpha’s voice out.

“Hey Light,” Detective Ida greeted solemnly, “How are you feeling? This can’t be easy for you.”

Light pulled his mental file on Detective Hideki Ide. Beta, Beta wife, two beta children, been with the bureau thirteen years. The Yggdrassills could put pressure on him through his daughter…

“Thanks Detective. I’m alright, right now. Mostly just in shock,” Light replied, softly.

“We’re here for you,” Ukita said, gently patting Light’s shoulder.
The Omega couldn’t help the slight cringe at the unwanted contact. He ignored the distinctive growling in his left ear. *Shut up and eat your cake.*

Detective Hirokazu Ukita. Unmated, eighteen years of service, severely injured four years ago. *Did the Yggdrassills pay his hospital bills?*

“Don’t worry Light,” Ida added, “We won’t let anything happen to you, and I’m sure your Beta will pull through.”

Ichinose just folded his arms and rolled his eyes, clearly displeased with this assignment. Detective Guren Ichinose. Widowed, four years in the NPA, arrogant bastard. *Maybe that’s what he had in common with the Yggdrassills…*

*Fucking hell, L. Why didn’t you just tell me which one I can’t trust?*

“Thanks guys,” Light smiled, tightly. “I’m going to go find which room Kite is in.”

“You should take a bathroom break,” L commented.

It had been four hours, and Light Yagami was still curled up in the armchair, ignoring most everything the Alpha said. The three officers were outside the room, taking turns standing at the door and patrolling the floor.

The mole had yet to make contact with the Yggdrassills.

“Why?” the brunette snapped, not bothering to look up.

“To give the impression that there are times when you are unwatched,” L mumbled around a strawberry.

Since reading the unsealed files, the detective had been finding excuses to talk to the Omega as often as possible. From the data, L was re-evaluating Light’s motives for assisting with the case,
starting with the young man wanting to interview with Shintaro. *Reckless disregard for self preservation, exaggerated narcissism, over-confidence… perhaps he just wants an opportunity to get revenge… or an excuse to die… or both…*

Except the brunette seemed anything but depressed.

Light raised his head enough to glare at the nearest hidden camera. The first thing the brunette had done, upon entering Kite Gingsu’s recovery room, was reorient the comfiest seat so that he faced all three cameras and could aim angry looks directly at the detective from multiple angles. This had the unfortunate side effect of hiding the Omega’s screen from L’s sight.

*That’s something Kira would do…*

Unfortunately, it was something anyone would do if they knew they were being watched. But Matt still had a side assignment of hacking in again as soon as possible to see what Light was up to. The brunette had run diagnostics on his computer as soon as it had arrived, which though extremely suspicious, was what any wealthy investor would do. Light Yagami had thus identified (and removed) the spyware Matt had added last night.

The brunette sighed, stretching his long neck and rolling his shoulders. L tried not to choke on his strawberry lollipop. (Also buried in the locked case files, L had discovered that Light had tested as a Type 1A Omega. Medically known as the Omegas with the greatest levels of pheromone control, fertility, and physical fitness. Commonly known as the most desirable of potential mates. Legally known as the most likely to attract stalkers.)

Light shot an evil grin at the camera. *You know exactly what you’re doing, don’t you?*

“You should also wander into the cafeteria,” L instructed detachedly, not wanting to give the brunette the satisfaction of knowing he was affected by that little display.

The Omega’s grin morphed into a sneer. *Because it’s fashionable to abduct someone while he’s eating miso?*

*Ew… Why would you eat…? Nevermind.* “To sustain your metabolism. You did not consume any of my proffered cake this morning, therefore I have concluded you must be hungry.”

The Omega gave him a withering look, before standing and exiting the room, taking the laptop
with him. L watched him speak briefly with the cop outside (Ichinose), and walk the short distance to the restrooms.

“L,” Watari drawled patronizingly, not looking away from his own workstation, “Your Alpha is showing. Leave the poor Omega be.”

L zoomed in on the brunette’s face, as he emerged a half a minute later. “Light Yagami is in danger of being abducted. It would be irresponsible for me to leave him be.”

“You are flirting with him,” the older Alpha admonished. “And not particularly well, I might add.”

_Am I? That’s unfortunate…_ He bit down, crunching the lollipop. The detective wanted to know why Light Yagami on paper was so different from Light Yagami in person, and if some poor flirting got the answer, then so be it.

The brunette made his way back to his Beta’s room, smirking at the camera before curling up again. _Omegas really do like cozy things…_ L glanced down at the chair next to him. _Hmm… perhaps we can move an armchair—oh hell._

Watari was right; he was acting like he was courting the Omega.

_Focus on Kira…_

“I had Detective Ichinose let Detective Ide know to bring back food the next time they change shifts.” Light smiled innocently. “If they grab me while I’m eating, I’ll do my best not to choke on the soup.”

“Please do. It would be in no one’s interest if you fell victim to an accidental death.” L replied drily.

He turned to his third screen, with the compiled list of biochemists entering the country. He scrolled through it, looking for any red flags. _No one suspicious yet…_ Although there was a rather large influx of PhDs due to annual ICBME conference next week.
“Watari, do preliminary background checks on everyone attending this symposium.”

“Of course L.”

The younger Alpha refocused on the evidence and almost missed the next question the Omega on screen asked.

“I suppose you want me to go quietly, if they do come for me, right?”

The detective’s black eyes snapped over to the younger man. He thought quickly, buying time by selecting another lollipop. He couldn’t quite get the image of a submissive Light Yagami to fit. The brunette couldn’t not fight.

“If they do get near you, you should struggle, but not so much that they actually hurt you. If they hit you, make it seem like they hit harder than they did. Try to seem disabled while actually staying physically fit. I’ll issue instructions as needed. Your records indicate high levels of distrust in authority, but you’re going to have to trust me to send reinforcements.”

Those caramel eyes narrowed. “And if you fail?”

L growled, lowly. Why do you insist on insulting me? I have never not solved a case and you know it.

“I don’t fail. But, hypothetically, other than during the chaos of the initial abduction, they will only harm you if they have to. If you are submissive and polite, you might even be able to extract some information. Just avoid sounding like you’re interrogating them.”

The Omega leaned forward. “And if they try to rape me?”

L froze. He swallowed, considering his answer very carefully. He knows I read his files… The Omega was staring directly at the camera, daring the Alpha to try and deny the possibility.

“Do everything you can to avoid that situation. If it comes down to it, do what you must to survive. And not just in the moment; make sure you can live with whatever choice you make.”
The brunette nodded slowly. L took that as acceptance of his answer.

“They will ask me why I wasn’t with my Beta last night,” Light said casually, glancing over at the unmoving Beta on the gourney.

This is how you deal with your nerves isn’t it? Trying to account for every possible outcome?

“You should tell them your father sent a family friend for you,” the Alpha said, “That he was scared you were in danger because he’d heard about a case where the Yggdrassills targeted families of officers.”

“And if they ask me about L?”

The raven-haired detective smiled. The Omega had recovered his snarkiness.

“Obviously, I would prefer it if you lied. Of course you have only met with me, Ryuzaki, and Watari. They know L would never be foolish enough to reveal himself to a weak Omega.”

“I’ll see what I can do,” Light replied sarcastically, lowering his eyes again to the laptop.

“Yes, do that…” L commented, before glancing back at Matt. “Got anything yet?”

“Found the getaway vehicle from Gingsu’s attack. Light was right; they used an ambulance. I’m still working on finding where it returned to. Got a lead on the fucker who put the bug on him, too. Hitoshi Demegawa. Tracking him down now. Haven’t gotten into Light’s laptop yet; he’s not stupid enough to click on any of the links I’ve spammed him with and he stopped using the hospital network. Also, you saw Near made contact; said to add pyrazinamide to the Omega’s antibiotic cocktail.”

“They used an ambulance…” the Alpha mused. “That’s interesting.”

He glanced back at the Omega diligently working away in the hospital room. What are you up too, Light Yagami?
“Light, if the Yggdrassills have not moved on you by 7:00 p.m. tonight, Matt will meet you at the front entrance to return to the safe house. You will follow the same procedure as before, switching vehicles twice.”

The Omega glanced up, flicking his eyes over to the clock above the door and grimacing. *So you don’t like hospitals?* L shook his head and began typing.

Matt had the Gingsu crime scene processed, Watari was keeping tabs on the Omegas’ and known Yggdrassills’ whereabouts, and Near had sent a list of the base chemicals for XoXo synthesis. It wasn’t much, but perhaps it was time to start putting a rough geographic profile together.

Before even getting the map up, the detective was interrupted.

“You said you wanted to make it seem like I’m unwatched some of the time, right?” Light asked, looking thoughtful.

The detective’s eyes snapped up to gaze into Light’s amber ones through the camera. *Well, that doesn’t sound suspicious…* “Yes, I believe I said that.”

“I’m going to go for a walk then. I’ll sneak past Ichinose and wander off; I won’t leave the hospital. When Ide shows up with the food, they’ll know to come looking for me. And the Yggdrassill’s mole will tell them I’m stupid enough to slip my protection detail. And I’m telling you now so you don’t panic and think I’m going off script.”

L ran his thumb over his lips. It wasn’t a bad idea; he had the whole hospital covered and, if the Omega looked a bit restless, then the dirty cop would report that as a weak point in their defense.

“And where will you be going?” the Alpha asked, curiously.

“Anywhere, but here. The nurses are all registered Betas so I’ll have a chaperone at all times. I just… don’t like being locked up.”

*Then why do you work from home?* The Omega was looking down at the ground, not challenging the detective with his stare for once. *You’re very manipulative, Light… What’s your real reason is*
“Hmm… Very well. Don’t leave the hospital.”

Your chances of being Kira just increased by two percent… L was also curious to see if the Omega could give the officer outside his door the slip.

Turned out he could.

Light cracked the door and waited patiently, until the elevator dinged. When Detective Ichinose looked away, towards the opening doors, the slender Omega slipped out and quickly rounded the corner. It was incredibly smooth and admirable simple.

The raven-haired Alpha wanted to laugh. *Is that how you sneak out of your apartment?*

He turned back to the map, but was halted by the shrill chime of his notification system. The Alpha jerked back to the first monitor, which was flashing a warning.

‘SMS communication detected’

His eyes snapped back to the screen showing Detective Ide in the stairwell.

*Finally…*

Chapter End Notes

Why hello! I've been good, for three weeks in a row!!!!

Remember when I said I was going to throw an action scene in there... Ya, I really didn't think I was lying. But, I did type it. It just doesn't belong here... Yet.

If there are any geniuses out there who find that I have made a mistake with my exceptionally intricate (it really isn't that intricate) chain of events or flow of logic,
please call me out. I have this evil master document called 'Research' which tells me when I'm allowed to reveal things. I don't follow it very well. Since I didn't put much effort into it to begin with. The 'Timeline' document is a little better... But I don't listen to that one either.

Anywho! Thank you everyone who has stuck with it so far and left amazing comments. I can't tell if the wheels are turning on screen, but they definitely are off screen. Let me know what you think!
Chapter Summary

Don't give Light a computer. Don't give L an Omega.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Light wandered down the hall, making it look like he was moving aimlessly. He had forty six minutes before Detective Ide returned with some form of god-awful hospital-cafeteria food. And he needed to get in to see the recovering Omegas before then.

The voice in his ear had fallen suspiciously silent since he’d left his room, but Light figured the world’s greatest detective was more interested in seeing what he was up to that talking to him right now.

He neatly dodged around a nurse rolling an unconscious Alpha down the hallway.

The only good thing about hospitals, was that no one looked twice at an unaccompanied Omega. Inside the building and under the Hippocratic Oath, a hospital was deemed a safe-zone. Every doctor, every surgeon, every nurse was sworn to protect life within the walls. The few Alpha clinicians that worked in the general population trained extensively to channel their protective instincts into saving lives, rather than challenging each other. Of course, whenever possible, patient were assigned caretakers of their same Dynamic; otherwise a Beta nurse was always available. And each wing and ward contained at least one Beta superintendent, who kept tight watch on all personnel.

For now, that meant the brunette could walk freely, with only the occasional passing glance of a mildly concerned Alpha. No one wanted to accidentally flirt with a potentially grieving Omega.

The strong smell of bleach also helped.

The ER was the only possible place where an Omega may feel unsafe, due to the inherent chaos. But Light had a different destination in mind.

Golden eyes flicked up to the security camera behind the nurse’s station. L will have me on
surveillance anywhere in here… I’ll have to make it look like I stumble upon the Omegas ward by accident.

The vigilante had already knew where the victims were being treated. They weren’t actually listed as patients in the hospital records, but the rooms where they were being kept also weren’t listed as available. It had been easy enough to connect the dots.

If he had time, he’d swing down to the coroner’s office to ask about the fifth victim.

Light took several purposeful wrong turns, ending up heading towards the fertility clinic. It was the most natural thing an Omega wandering around the hospital could do (though these clinics mostly only saw Alphas and Betas, since the Omegas were examined at the mating agencies). It annoyed him, but also gave him a plausible alibi for L later.

Since, while I’m busy acting like a child-crazed idiot, Kira be will informing the NPA of the activities of a one Hitoshi Demegawa...

Unbeknownst to his guardian detective, Light had been watching L and company, while L and company had been watching him. He didn’t have the processing power to run his own investigation, but it was simple enough to piggyback off of their findings.

As soon as Matt had flagged a potential suspect for bugging Kite, Light had peeled off to do his own research on the Alpha. It had been a race to see who could locate the man first, and, had that been Beta nanny’s only project, he might have beaten Light (but only because the brunette was limited to the computing power of a HP Spectre that had to simultaneously contend in the New York Stock Exchange).

But the snarky redhead also had the responsibility of hacking into that same HP Spectre. (Light had been concerned it was the Yggdrassills who’d tampered with his laptop, knowing the instant Matsuda had handed it to him that someone had gotten to it, until he’d started getting coffee ads spamming his inbox.)

When it became clear that he needed to buy some time to investigate Demegawa, Light had deliberately connected to the hospital WiFi, letting Matt think he had an in. While the Beta switched assignments, Kira had found everything he could on Demegawa and prepared a delayed communication to the NPA that would send randomly in the next half hour.

It didn’t matter when Matt relayed the information to L, because the timestamp on Kira’s
untraceable email would prove he’d gotten it independently.

And then, L had very conveniently suggested Light take a restroom break, giving him an excuse to power down the laptop, cutting off Matt’s access. (The Beta was indeed good.) *But, as I showed the Yggdrassils, I’m better...*

Light smirked as he browsed through the fertility ward. (The first and only time he would ever smile in such a place.)

*And now, if L suspects me at all, he’ll think I’m investigating the Omegas.*

Not that Kira didn’t want a firsthand look at the results of the Yggdrassils research. It could be quite handy later on. (It also helped him feel less like a sitting duck.)

He loitered for several moments, studying the magazine rack, until he caught several of the Betas shooting him dark looks, while filling out their charts. *Jealousy...* Light’s jaw clenched and a dark schema ran its course. *L’s read my files by now...* Suddenly, he couldn’t leave the ward fast enough.

Somewhere on the fifth floor, the Omega turned a corner and spied Detective Ichinose heading directly towards him. It was inevitable but, *Ugh...*

The brunette made the unplanned U-turn, ducking into the pediatrics facility before the officer could spot him. L was really going to think he wanted children now. *Unfortunate. But necessary.* At least this ward had a second exit.

Light took his time, meandering through the maze-like hallways, always feeling the detective’s dark eyes on him. The Alpha still wasn’t talking, which meant he was waiting to see what Light would do. *Watch closely, L, watch very closely...*

Finally, the Omega ‘chanced’ upon the right location.

The closed ward was as easy to get into, as getting out of his room had been. He just had to wait for a doctor to leave, and he innocently caught the door.
There were a few on-duty cops guarding the halls, which might have presented a problem…

If Light hadn’t been the Chief’s son.

“Detective Shiraba?” Light asked, feigning surprise. “It’s been a while.”

“Light?” The Beta, on the other hand, didn’t have to fake his astonishment at seeing his boss’s Omega son. “What are you doing here?”

The com in Light’s ear finally crackled back to life. “Do not tell him you are in protective custody.”

The brunette let his face fall. “My Beta… he was in an accident last night. I’m here visiting him… but I couldn’t take just sitting in there any more.”

“Oh no! Is he going to be alright?”

Shiraba seemed genuinely concerned. Light remembered his father complaining that this Beta was too soft-hearted to handle being detective.

“I think so. He’s in a recovery room now, so… we’ll see. My father had mentioned some of you guys were here, so I wandered around to come say hi.”

L will know that’s a lie…

“Yeah, we have some patients that need protection,” Shiraba admitted, scratching his head.

“Ah, right. Dad had said the NPA had rescued some Omegas from a trafficking ring. Are they going to be okay?”

“Not sure. They were completely whacked out when they got here, but… They’re more coherent now. Don’t know if that’s a good thing, though…”
“Why not?”

“They’re terrified. They freak the fuck out anytime anyone who isn’t an Omega comes in. And even the Omega nursing staff can’t wear white coats or they’ll flip.” Shiraba leaned in conspiratorially. “Ya know, I think the traffickers were doing tests on them. Some sort of weird experimental crap and that’s why they don’t like anything that looks too sciency.”

Light refrained from rolling his eyes. Well, not the most brilliant deduction, but you’re not wrong…

“Have any of their families been to visit?” the Omega asked, knowing the answer.

“Naw, most of them are foreign, so it’s taking some time to track down their next of kin and get them here. One of them, though… poor kid. His parents didn’t want to see him. Talked to them myself. Said he was damaged goods…” Shiraba trailed off, sadly.

The brunette’s temper flared, but he immediately reigned it in before the Beta could scent his rage, burying the emotion in clenched fists. So you can’t auction off your virgin Omega trophy anymore? Good, I hope that means you starve…

“Is he doing alright? Do you think it would help I talked to him? I mean you know… Maybe I can offer him some support?”

While Light had never much had direct contact with Shiraba, he was sure playing the victim Omega card was going to work. Because of who is father was, rumors about him had plagued the entire NPA. (And it certainly didn’t help that his parents kept sending Alpha detectives to his mating interviews, just adding fuel to the fire.)

For now, he just let the watercooler gossip work its magic. The detective hesitated; he was here to stop anyone from getting at the victims, but who the hell would suspect the Chief Soichiro Yagami’s unmated Omega boy?

“Yeah, that might actually be good for him. That’s his room, there.” The cop pointed at a door across the hall, and Light nodded.
“I’ll only stay a few minutes.”

“You’re a good kid, Light,” Shiraba commented. “You’re father is always bragging about you, you know.”

Light smiled and shook his head, pretending to be embarrassed, and ducked into the room. All mirth drained from his face, as he was confronted with the Omega from Pondu.

_Damn it._

He couldn’t just turn around and leave. But… _No chance he’d recognize me… right?_

The kid’s eyes cracked at the sound of the door closing, and, sensing an unfamiliar presence, began emitting a scared whine. Light stepped forward, emphasizing his Omega scent. When the cherries and chocolate flavor washed over the patient, the abject terror died down.

_Haru Hayashida._

Light couldn’t help comparing the boy in front of him to the one in the container. The other Omega still looked fearful, but at least he was full conscious. And he looked a hell of a lot better than when Light had first seen him, two days ago. Still dangerously ill, but functional. The circles under his eyes weren’t very much different from a certain detective Kira had met recently.

“Light, if you wanted to interview the victims, all you had to do was ask,” L remarked. The Alpha sounded mildly irritated, and Light smothered his smirk. _Yeah right, you would have scripted my questions, and interviewed them through me…_

“Who are you?” the boy (Haru) asked accusingly.

_Good. He doesn’t recognize me._ As drugged as the kid had been, Light hadn’t expected him to, but it was nice to get confirmation. _And this shows L that he doesn’t know me…_

“I’m a friend of some of the cops at the NPA,” Light answered, “I wanted to see how you were doing.”
He approached slowly, not wanting to seem too aggressive and cause the patient to become more defensive. But Omegas had an instinctive trust of one another (which was probably why the Omega doctors could come and go without scaring the victims into cardiac arrest) and Light was able to come within a yard of the foot of the bed.

“Does it matter?” the other Omega asked, bitterly.

“Probably,” Light retorted, before forcing himself to soften. “Do you want to talk about it?”

“Talk about what?”

The dark-haired Omega was looking anywhere but at him, so Haru clearly knew what Light was asking. *Don’t blame you; I wouldn’t want to talk either. But I’m still gonna ask…*

“What happened,” Light said bluntly, “I know the NPA asked you questions, but that was just for their investigation. I was wondering if you wanted to actually talk.”

“Why?” Haru faced him, blinking back confused tears.

It wasn’t surprising, since Light didn’t fit the bill of doctor, cop, or therapist. But the brunette shrugged. “Because I heard that your parents are idiots.”

The other Omega startled, shocked that Light would be so blunt. He swallowed a few times before responding.

“They were screening the final candidates for me to mate with next month…” he whispered, staring down at his blanket. “None of them want me now…”

“So?” Light challenged.

The patient looked up, nonplussed, before offering a small, sad smile to the standing Omega. He weakly pointed towards the end of the bed, indicating Light had permission to sit.
“So?” he huffed. “I guess you grew up in the city. My parents always said the urban schools were giving Omegas inappropriate ideas.” Haru’s laugh was somewhere between bitter and hysterical. “Guess I’ll be moving to the city now…”

*Inappropriate ideas? Really?* Light decided to forgo his usual rant against the backwardness of that ideology in favor of getting some actual information.

“Do the doctors know why you’re sick?” he asked, jerking his head toward the IVs.

Haru glanced back at the equipment and shuddered. “The people who took me… They put something in me. They said it would help me… reach my full potential. The doctors say it’s an infection.”

“Like a super-soldier serum?” Light suggested, sardonically. That was obviously *not* what they’d injected into the Omega, but Haru looked like the comic-book type.

Light’s wit earned him another small smile.

“Ha, no. They didn’t tell me. But they gave me two injections of it the day I was taken, and after that… I don’t really remember much… Except the training… And the shadow guy.”

L had admitted that they didn’t know what the purpose of XoXo was. *So it stays dormant in the bloodstream for over a month?* That was alarming. *And I really hope shadow guy doesn’t mean the guy who rescued you…*

“Training?” Light asked absently, still hung up on the implications of what else Haru might remember.

“Ya.” The other Omega averted his gaze, looking panicked and ashamed. “I… I don’t want to talk about it…”

*Shit.* The way criminal packs treated Omegas wasn’t exactly secret. It was just the same practices that had widespread fifty years ago. And Kira was very familiar with the results. No wonder Haru Hayashida looked sick to his stomach.
“I’m pretty sure I can guess,” Light said, trying to sound compassionate and not disgusted.

Haru curled into himself further, but the brunette pressed onward. “They put a collar on you. Made you follow orders. Beat you if you messed up. And left you chained to a wall when they didn’t need you.”

The patient gaped at him, lips parted and eyes wide, before swallowing and very minutely nodding. *Yeah, that’s what I thought…*

“They’re fucked up. You know that right?” Light demanded.

Haru swallowed and nodded a bit more.

“How’d you know all that?”

*Damn.* It was Light’s turn to look away. “History class. And my dad’s a cop. ‘Omega training’ is pretty common in the mafia packs.”

“Yeah, I guess that’s true. They didn’t exactly depose it where I went to school. Though you seem to know a lot about it…” the other Omega whispered, eyeing the brunette warily.

Light refused to respond. Eventually, the patient gave up and looked away too.

They sat in silence for a while, a mutual understanding permeating the space. Haru reached forward to take his hand, tugging softly. Light scooted up the bed a bit so that they could grip each other’s forearms.

Haru’s scent turned needy, clearly wanting the other Omega to curl up and hold him, as someone who wasn’t going to press for more. Light ignored the signal, even though his ribs were in complete agreement. There were several problems with that plan: the primary one being that an Alpha was watching.

*L is probably loving this…*
The brunette slowly tamped down the swirling emotions that came with physical contact and got back on track. *Find out what he knows…*

“When they weren’t be perverted assholes, did they at least leave you alone?” *Maybe he can describe the environment?*

Haru shrugged. “I don’t remember much. Even when… they were around me… it’s fuzzy… I remember it was cold. And dark. And there were doctors… It was hard to tell when I was awake and when I was asleep.”

“I’m guessing they didn’t leave you any windows to jump out of?” Light suggested, hoping for more details about the facilities. *Did they have you underground?*

“No. Don’t think I could’ve jumped if I’d’ve wanted to… But it really was always dark where they kept me. Unless one of the doctors came in… Then it got real bright.”

Light sighed. *He probably doesn’t know anything. The Yggdrassills would be too smart to let him witness something of value, even if he was drugged… But cold and bright. He was definitely in a lab before they put him in that box, most likely below ground level. They’ll probably have a similar set up here in Tokyo…*

“Did you see any of others while you were there?”

“Others?”

Haru seemed genuinely taken aback by the question. Light tried not to frown. *Of course the cops wouldn’t have told him anything either.*

“The police are guarding several rooms here. I assumed they were for other Omegas who had escaped.”

The dark-haired Omega threw his head back against the pillow, jaw clenching. Obviously, he’d been unaware of the extent of the Yggdrassills’ operation. Light watched him slowly vibrate in denial.
“Why would they do this?”

“Because their evil bastards who need to be brought to justice.”

Light didn’t realize until the words were out of his mouth how much they sounded like L’s statement this morning. At least there was no chuckling in his ear.

Haru sat in silence, fighting back tears and clutching Light’s arm. The brunette could tell what he was feeling; happiness and guilt. Happy that he wasn’t the only one, that he wasn’t alone, and then absolutely loathing himself for that feeling. That was something the therapists could deal with later. Or maybe Rem. She was surprisingly good with trauma victims.

“I didn’t escape you know,” the sick Omega finally whispered.

The brunette froze.

Oh crap…

Light swallowed and tried to look interested - but not too interested - in what Haru was about to reveal. Part of him wanted to redirect the conversation in any other line, since L was obviously listening. But that would be even more suspicious.

The best he could do was probe lightly, and hope the kid didn’t say any keywords.

Like ‘Omega’.

Or ‘you’.

“The police found you?” he suggested tentatively. Perhaps, if he could lead Haru to assume it was an undercover cop who had pulled him from the storage crate…

“No. No, someone else. He got me out,” the other Omega said. “I-I don’t think he was with the police. He was hiding his face. Cops don’t do that.”
Light allowed the silence to creep in, wondering if it would be okay to give some leading hints.

Or maybe some outlandish ones…

“So you’re saying Tokyo has some crazy, masked superhero running around saving Omegas? That’s comforting.” Alright, so maybe referring to himself as superhero was a bit much, but the skeptical tone should’ve made up for it. There wasn’t much wiggle room for responses here; not with the detective both eavesdropping and knowing that Light had seen the footage from the rescue.

Haru actually laughed at that. “I know it sounds crazy, but he did save me. And he was real. The cops who interviewed me were asking about him, so I know I didn’t imagine it.”

Okay, so far, not so bad…

He was walking an incredibly thin line, but it didn’t sound like the kid knew anything specific about Kira. Though if Light was wrong about that, things were going to get dicey.

“Did he sweep you off your feet, reveal his secret identity, and promise to protect you for the rest of your days?” the brunette asked, playfully.

“Ha, not even close,” the other Omega smirked, before sobering. “He was actually kinda scary… I remember being terrified when I saw him. I thought he was with them, but then… Let’s just say I wouldn’t mind thanking him.”

Great. So I just have to convince L that I’m not ‘scary’ and I’ll magically not fit his only eyewitness description…

He gently squeezed the boy’s arm ruefully.

It was time to change the subject.

Hopefully L doesn’t mind me giving away some secrets… And if he does, fuck him. “They
attacked my Beta.”

(There was no immediate shouting in his ear, so either L didn’t have mics in here, or he didn’t disapprove.)

Haru’s brow furrowed in confusion.

Light explained, “The people who took you. When you escaped or got rescued or whatever, they attacked the car my Beta was driving to try and kidnap me. That’s why I’m in the hospital, to make sure he’s okay. Since I know people at the NPA, I heard you were here…”

The grip on his arm tightened painfully. “Don’t let them get you.”

Well, that is the unfortunate current plan of attack… Light decided not to say that out loud, seeing at the terror in the other Omega eyes. “I’ll be careful. The NPA is protecting us, so it’ll be fine. You should just focus on getting better.”

Haru’s face fell. “I don’t know what I’m going to do when I get out of here.”

“Get a job? Get an apartment?” Light suggested. Send a big fuck you to your parents? “Here, I can give you my mating rep’s number. She’s good. And not just at finding mates; she actually helps her Omegas. Just… don’t let her set you up with Misa Amane.”

“Wait! The supermodel!?” Haru’s eyes widened, incredulously. “Why wouldn’t I want to be set up with her?”

So much for solidarity…

Light hopped up to grab a pen and scribble down Rem’s number. He handed it back to the dark-haired Omega, who smiled tentatively.

“I need to be getting back,” Light said, jerking his head back towards the door. “I should be there when my Beta wakes up.”
He’d lingered enough, and his protection detail was probably starting to panic. The sick Omega nodded and watched him disappear out the door. Light tried not to feel guilty about using the boy for what he knew. A major benefit of being Kira was that he never had to deal with victim trauma.

The Omega waved goodbye to Shinbaro, as he hurried out of the ward, wanting to leave the hospital and not come back. *This is why I hate these places… They’re so goddamn depressing.* And he’d barely gotten any usable information out of the witness.

A crackling in his ear told him his reprieve from the raven-haired detective was over.

*“Matt was wrong. You might make a decent therapist.”*

Light and Matt were on their way back. L had instructed Light to inform his father and protection detail that he would be returning to the hospital tomorrow, since Kite Gingsu was stabilizing and might be able to be let out of the induced coma he was in.

That gave the Yggdrassils another six hour window to make their move.

L dropped his thirteenth empty plate of cake on the tea tray. He’d been on edge since seeing the mole make contact.

Compoundingly, he’d been forced to relocate the other five male Omegas, after the Yggdrassils had sent an abduction team to one of the safehouses. It had been close. Too close. But it made it painfully obvious that the NPA was not to be trusted. L had had to pull Aiber in, to guarantee the secrecy of the Omegas’ location.

The leaks inside the NPA were becoming irksome.

And on top of all that, Kira had decided to be a pain in the ass…

The vigilante had sent a tip to the NPA, informing them that Hitoshi Demegawa was responsible for the assault on Light Yagami’s Beta, and giving them the Alpha’s last known location. That is, until the strike team, led by Chief Yagami himself, descended upon the condo and attempted to
arrest the suspect.

(The police hadn’t felt the need to consult L before acting.)

Demegawa hadn’t gone quietly, pulling both a semi-automatic and a knife on the officers. He was no longer available for questioning.

(In fairness to Kira, things probably would have gone exactly the same, had it been L’s instructions that led the police to the suspect… Probably…) 

Technically, Demegawa’s suicide by cop was not Kira’s fault. But the detective was still mad at him.

*At least you’re not dead… That’s good, since I’ll have a chance to arrest you.*

*Unlike Demegawa.*

Unfortunately, this meant that it was almost impossible for Light to be Kira, as he had been sitting on another Omega’s hospital bed when the tip had come through. *Though he could have set up the tip to send automatically…*

The Alpha growled at the empty condo.

If Light Yagami was doing all this to deflect suspicion, he was going to be sorely disappointed in the end. L was going find Kira either way…

(Preferably before Matt murdered him, since the vigilante had outfoxed him. Again.)

And Near was scheduled to arrive within the hour. L was resignedly curious as to what the two Omegas were going to make of each other. To the best of his knowledge, Light was uniquely abnormal in his disdain of human contact. The brunette had even cringed when the sick Omega had taken his arm. Near at least accepted the younger Betas from the orphanage as occasional sleeping buddies. He didn’t condescend to talk to them, but he allowed them curl up against him.
Last night was probably the first real contact Light has had in years…

It was going to be an amusing experiment telling the brunette and white-haired Omegas that they were bunking together. Not because they had to, but because L wanted eyes on Light Yagami at all times.

As soon as he heard the telltale sound of the elevator arriving, the Alpha leapt off his chair to go greet the first Omega.

The brunette stepped into the hall, and L found himself thoroughly pleased the chocolate smell was back. And then… oh goddamn it. Bloody Alpha instincts. Stupidly delicious Omega pheromones. Recipe for stupidity…

“Hey, Light.”

“Ryuzaki.”

The Omega’s clipped tone made it clear that Light was still annoyed at having been left in the hospital all day.

L smothered a growl. Do you save this attitude just for me? The young man was clearly capable of being charming when he chose to be. Charming enough to trick multiple detectives into lowering their guard for him. The raven’s fingers curled curled in his pockets.

“What am I? Chopped liver?” Matt griped, since neither the Alpha nor Omega chose to acknowledge the Beta.

“No, you’re just the babysitter,” Light replied coolly and moved towards the kitchen.

I deduce that you are looking for coffee…

The raven-haired Alpha trailed after him; Light Yagami was going to be allowed one cup before L started extracting information. What excuses will you concoct about that interview with Haru Hayashida?
The brunette noticed him following and rolled his eyes.

“So, what happened while I wasted an entire day sitting in a hospital chair?”

“The man who planted the tracker on your Beta was identified.”

But if you were Kira, you’d already know that…

“What!”

Light spun, forgetting that he was holding hot liquid. L dodged the flying coffee and watched the brunette grimace as it splashed to the ground. Overreacting or overacting?

“Is he in custody!?”

“No,” L answered evenly.

The younger man frowned, brows furrowing. “Why the hell not?! Kite almost died because of him!”

“The NPA raided his home. He opened fire. The officers followed standard operating procedure and shot to kill.”

L watched Light’s face carefully. The Omega seemed genuinely surprised, those caramel eyes closing as he processed the information. You really are a talented actor…

“Good. At least he won’t be able to hurt anyone else.”

I suppose you would be happy, since his actions would have likely led to a decrease in your life expectancy.
The Omega took several breaths. He turned back to grab a towel and then bent down to mop of the lost coffee. L had to purposefully looked away from the flexible body. *You did that on purpose…*

“Where’s Watari?” Light asked, changing the subject as he straightened.

“He’s retrieving an associate from the airport. They should be returning shortly.”

“An associate?”

“Yes. I believe I told you he’s been characterizing the effects of XoXo. He wants to study the victims personally.”

The brunette’s jaw clenched. “I think they’re done willing to be used as guinea pigs. You should let limit your curiosity to what’s absolutely necessary and let them recover.”

L followed again, as the Omega strode down towards the investigation room. The detective was intrigued by the protectiveness Light Yagami was displaying. *That’s an Alpha trait… Did you forget your Dynamic?*

Of course, being distracted, he nearly steamrolled the Omega, when the younger man stopped dead in the doorway.

“Where’s Matt?”

L glanced around, taking in the empty workroom, and shook his head. He could make some very educated guesses as to where the redhead had vanished to. All of them involving a video chat with another of his successors.

The Alpha couldn’t help feeling insulted. *You really need to start trusting me.*

“He is likely taking a call with one of our contacts,” L answered, flatly, “Are you worried that I will take advantage of you, Light Yagami?”
Light glared at him. “I’m fine. What else did I miss?”

The Alpha’s dark eyes narrowed. Clearly, tempers were running high after a full day of stress. L was of the mind to goad the Omega a bit more. Suspects revealed the most interesting things when angered. *Except he’s not quite a suspect… yet.*

“You seem to believe you are working on this case. Though you are technically just a material witness.”

The brunette slammed the mug on the desk and spun to face the Alpha. “You left me in a hospital room for eight hours! If you want me to continue to cooperate, you’re going to keep me in the loop!”

The Omega was curiously furious at the insinuation that he was useless to other aspects the case. L tried not to smirk. *While you do have the potential to be helpful, your outbursts are quite childish.* The invisible smirk became an invisible frown. *And you continue to disrespect my authority as both the lead detective and Alpha here.*

“Also, you did not spend the entire day in Kite Gingsu’s room,” L pointed out, running a thumb across his lips to stay neutral. “I remember you taking an informative walk about the hospital. Tell me Light, how did you find the rooms where the victims were being treated?”

The brunette folded his arms aggressively. The Alpha ground his teeth, feeling his annoyance transmute into anger. *What did I say about challenging me?*

“My father told me he was tired of sending people to the hospital. So, knowing he’s working on this case, I deduced he was referring to the Omega victims you showed me. With that, I wandered around until I found the closed wing and saw Officer Shinbaro. It was easy enough to guess who he was guarding.”

*Either that or you hacked the hospital logs to find the rooms that were ‘unavailable’. That’s what I would have done…*

“And why did you want to see them?” L asked, sending an involuntary pulse of pheromones to remind the Omega who he was yelling at. (Not that Light paid it any attention.)
“What happened to them is what the Yggdrassills are trying to do to me!” Light snapped, “I needed to know!”

L’s jaw relaxed. The brunette’s answer soothed the Alpha in him a tiny bit. *You’re scared? But too proud to show it? I suppose I am asking rather a lot of you…* The detective hummed acceptance, before changing lines of interrogation.

“You took a detour through the fertility clinic. I was unaware you were interested in procreation.”

“I’m not,” Light hissed.

*You persist in provoking me…* The scent of the Omega’s anger was becoming more potent, and Light continued holding the aggressive stance. L could almost feel his intelligence dropping with each individual pheromone Light threw at him. *This is why I don’t deal with human nuisances.*

“You are an Omega,” the detective pointed out, rationally, “Most Omegas are thrilled to bear children. Based on your behavior and history, I would conclude you have similar aspirations.”

And then Light hit him.

Chapter End Notes

Woot woot! Chapter 13! Unlucky? Maybe.

Thank you everyone who has commented. I'm slowly getting back to responding to all of them. But fear not! I shall respond because I love them so very much! Feedback is so welcome, I can't even say. Criticism too! It keeps me from slipping into my natural lazy habits.

Also, I need to be a bit more careful about what I say in these notes and comments, because it seems my sass is translating poorly in 2017. I humbly beg forgiveness, if you were one of the victims of my poorly timed wit.

Anywho, thank you so very much for reading!
A Necessary Distraction

Chapter Summary

That thing that people do when they get really, really angry.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Light’s fist connected with his jaw, sending the Alpha hurtling back into the wall.

_Huh… well that was unexpected._

The detective sat there, unmoving, blinking at the huffing form of his attacker, trying to process what had just happened. _An Omega… hit… me…_ The surprise was numbing.

For about sixteen seconds.

_Ow… That really hurt._

L tasted blood. The coppery tang melded with the throbbing ache, and the Alpha found himself livid. His tongue ran along the split in his lip, feeling the sting of saliva. His long limbs coiled, bracing against the wall.

“You throw a strong right hook, Light Yagami. I hope you are prepared for consequences.”

Those caramel eyes narrowed in anger.

L launched himself forward, pushing off the wall to fall towards the offending Omega. At the last second, he pivoted, twisting and extending his leg, to slam against the brunette’s shoulder.

The Alpha had the satisfaction of watching his opponent go sprawling onto the floor. After just two blows, it was obvious the difference in strength between the two. _Any sane creature would apologize and beg for forgiveness right about now._
Though it appeared the Omega did not fall into that category.

“You found insult in my supposition that you wish for children?” the raven-haired Alpha drawled, stalking towards the prone form of the younger man, “Yes, I suppose you would. But regardless, if you attack me, I shall repay the favor in kind.”

“Fuck you!” the Omega snarled, reorganizing his awry limbs. He clambered off the ground, and lunged at the stronger man.

L expected Light to either bodily tackle him or swing his fist again, but… Half a meter from his position, the brunette fell to the ground and swept his leg. The detective hadn’t anticipated needing to guard his shin, so….

Fuck… Ow.

L got his hands out, just barely preventing his face from smashing into the hardwood, as he joined the Omega on the floor.

*Cheater. That’s not your style, Light.*

A series of bestial growls bubbled forth from his throat, and his instincts demanded the total annihilation of the opponent who had dared strike him twice. (L’s rational thought process didn’t much disagree.)

The raven rolled, catching the brunette’s arm, and dragged himself atop of the slender body.

Unerringly, L’s teeth found the Light’s throat and locked on. The younger man shuddered, hesitating at the vulnerable position. The Alpha let his weight rest atop the brunette, pinning his opponent’s entire length, and, finally, claiming an unquestionably dominant position over this irksome Omega.

But within half a second, Light regained control of himself, struggling to free himself and beating at any part of the Alpha he could reach. The detective’s legs tangled about the Omega’s, immobilizing both of them from the waist down.
He growled against Light’s neck. *You cannot win this fight. You’re smart enough to realize that. Give up now.*

Unable to kick, Light’s hands sought purchase on the detective’s throat and eye sockets, searching for some sort of leverage that could force the teeth away from his jugular. L snarled, biting down a bit harder and catching the fist aimed at his jaw.

*There is nowhere to go, Light.*

*You.*

*Will.*

*Submit.*

It had been less than two minutes since the initial blow, and the Alpha had the Omega caged beneath him, all four of his assailant’s limbs pinned, control of his attacker’s throat, all while drowning out the Light’s cherry-chocolatey anger with a wash of dominant pheromones of his own.

Yet the Omega continued to resist.

L could tell his opponent was losing stamina, as the struggles became weaker and weaker.

But still, Light fought.

Until….

“Ryuzaki!”
“RYUZAKI!”

Light had never hear Watari sound so irate. Granted, he had only known the elderly Alpha for about twenty four hours, but… *I’ll bet he hasn’t yelled like that in years.*

The Omega could feel his anger dissipating as his adrenaline supply wore out, and, with the death of his rage, the throbbing from his side reasserted itself. *Fucking Alphas.*

The weight of the world’s best detective was crushing him, and Light’s sole mission in life right now, was to beat as many bruises into that pale skin as he could. It vexed the Omega to no end that, like all the idiots of the Dynamic, L was innately physically stronger than him.

*But he still needs me to submit...* Even if Light’s pride would have allowed such a thing, submitting now would only convince the detective that he was right and Light would happily bear some asshole Alpha’s pups. *Therefore, I am more than happy to disappoint you, L.*

Well, he would be more than happy later, when he wasn’t in excruciating pain. His thought process was getting fuzzier and fuzzier with each passing moment.

“Release him! Now!”

*Watari must be closer... he moves quick, for an old man...*

Not that the elderly Alpha would risk intervening, possibly aggravating the situation further.

Light felt the pressure on his throat lessen and immediately tucked his chin to guard the weakness. There was going to be a teeth-shaped bruise there tomorrow. *Rem was going have a field day next week...*

*Huh... Maybe this will get me out of interviews...*

Watari’s interruption may have distracted L for a brief moment, but the fury, in every inch of the corded body atop him, was not fading. Light was enveloped in a veritable bubble of coffee-
scented pheromones, still pouring out of the Alpha.

They kept whispering submit…

Light’s coherency tailed off.

*Odd… Usually they scream… But still… No fucking chance…*

The Omega tried to capitalize on the detective’s hesitation, tugging his arms free to send another series of strikes at the animal trapping him. His blows lacked any real force, what with his muscles beginning to quiver uncontrollably, due to the amount of agony being transmitted to his brain.

L growled against his cheek, an instinctual response to the continued insubordination. *You won’t stop until you’ve beaten me unconscious, will you?*

*Well, that’s what it will take if you want me…*

Black spots, matching L’s eyes, swam across his vision.

*… to submit…*

Spots. Multiplying.

*… to you.*

The last thing Light thought before he blacked out was:

*See? I told you so.*

______________________________

For all that his goal was to force the Omega to respect his authority, L hadn’t been prepared for warningless limpness beneath him. *Finally!* The Alpha rumbled in pleasure, and, with his victory
complete, the detective’s rationality returned.

He slowly released the iron grip on Light’s legs, but still kept the hold on the Omega’s wrists, just in case. He was going to bruise enough as it was.

_Ugh. Feisty little bugger…_

But that made it all the more satisfying when Light had finally submitted.

The raven lifted himself up enough to look down at the brunette’s face. Those beautiful caramel eyes were closed, and his opponent’s breathing was too shallow for someone who had just fought that hard.

“Light?”

No response.

L’s eyes widened. You fought until you passed out? Why? The detective quickly slid off the Omega’s enervated form, the lack of resistance soothing his need to dominate, but exponentially upping his anxiety. Watari surged forward, to kneel down beside them.

“He’s unconscious,” Watari snapped, checking a limp wrist for a pulse. “What happened?”

“He punched me,” L replied evenly, cupping Light’s face, trying to get some form of response. I only kicked him once…

“L!”

Watari rarely sounded so upset, but the younger Alpha was not in the mood to repent just yet. His mentor shook his grey head and ran probing fingers over Light’s right side.

“Nevermind. We need to get an X-ray. Now.”
L’s onyx eyes widened. *Okay, now I’ll repent.*

*Shit… his ribs.* Even with as much stun as Light’s sudden attack had inflicted, L hadn’t felt more shocked than right now. He scrambled to his feet. *You only stopped fighting because you passed out… and you passed out from pain? That’s cheating.*

The detective recalculated his Omega-intelligence coefficient. *Negative fifteen point three. And climbing.* But, on immediate review, maybe that was only applicable to this Omega. *Of all the cocoa-dipped hermits to bring home…* L gently shook the brunette’s shoulder.

“Light?”

No response.

“Get him to the bed,” Watari ordered, pulling out his phone. “I’ll have Matt go requisition an X-ray machine from Takanawa.”

The detective nodded absently and leaned in to scoop the Omega up. He was heavier than L would have guessed, which in hindsight, accounted for the muscle needed to shine his jaw. The Omega didn’t stir as he was pulled off the ground and L frowned.

*Wake up, damn it!*

As per usual, Light chose not to humor him.

This was not part plan; the Omega was proving entirely intractable. L needed to reevaluate letting Light anywhere near the Yggdrassils. The Alphas of that pack (or, in all honesty, any Alpha anywhere) would not tolerate the perpetual power struggle the Omega enacted. *Perhaps I should relocate him to the alternative safe house with Aiber…*

Except…

He didn’t want to.
Not even a little bit.

Because, that would let his only Kira suspect loose.

The brunette had fought an Alpha tonight. Any qualms about Light not being Kira, based on unlikelihood of an Omega fighting the security guards, were now defunct.

*That raised Light Yagami’s chances of being him to eight percent... I suppose even getting punched has it’s uses.*

L could admit that he’d been purposefully aggressive with the antagonizing, but it was unheard of for an Omega to initiate a physical confrontation. Especially with an Alpha. *Tears would have been appropriate. Silent treatment, apologies, shouting... Anything but a punch to the face.*

He glanced down at the unconscious man curled to his chest. Light’s records showed a perfect student, from a happy family, who occasionally offered Omega profiling advice to the NPA for his father’s cases. The face braced against his bicep, was not that person. And it certainly wasn’t the face of an Omega who had been sold and enslaved for four months either.

He gingerly placed Light on the bed of the guest suite and straightened, to study his conundrical asset from above.

No, this was the face of an Omega who had technically thrown the first punch. A strong one, at that. *If you hadn’t done laundry, would you have actually been able to hold your own? For longer than three minutes?* Obviously, the Alpha would have won regardless of the Omega’s health, but...

Watari’s voiced filtered down the hall, rather distorted, but L gathered that he was collecting the Omega’s full health history from Light Yagami’s mating agency. L’s mouth twitched; Light would probably appreciate if this incident didn’t make it in there.

The mirth faded quickly. *Still unconscious...* L held his hand to the Omega’s neck, taking the rapid pulse beneath the bruise.
The ding of the elevator indicated Matt’s departure. *Unchaperoned.*

*Again.*

This particular set of laws was one the detective had never been concerned with applying to himself before. L had left the orphanage before he’d ever presented, but even back then and there, amongst the castout genii, Omegas had been guarded and protected. Obviously, Japan as a nation was even more defensive of the Dynamic, than an eccentric English wayhouse.

L brought his free hand to his mouth, nibbling the tip of his thumb. *Odd…*

Light Yagami now ranked sixth in order of those people with whom the detective had had the most direct contact with. *Eighteen hours in your conscious company, Light Yagami. Twenty four hours overall.* L had put people into interrogation rooms for shorter associations with criminal ilk than that.

The Alpha’s hand shifted, moving to brush his thumb along the Omega’s sharp jawline. *I think I would prefer it if you were Kira…* However unlikely that actually was…

“Why did you try to kill him?”

L let his hand drop and spared a glance for the white-haired Omega in the doorway behind him. *He’s taller…* Though granted, the last time the detective had been in the same physical space as his palest successor was back at the orphanage, eight years ago. Near’s Beta could be heard clinking around the kitchen.

*It’s getting awfully crowded in my house.*

The Alpha turned back to the bed.

“Death was not my intention.”

Near leaned into the room, curiously, studying the unconscious Omega. “He’s in pain. I can smell it from here”
“I am aware, Near.” As I am the one who inflicted it...

The white-haired teen entered cautiously, keeping his head tilted submissively to L (as Light has yet to learn to do…) and reaching down to the brunette's wrist, to take his own assessment of Light’s condition.

“You could hold him.”

“There has been extensive discussion on the unavailability of that option,” the Alpha stated dryly.

“He fits the profile.”

It wasn't a question, and L didn’t bother answering. Light Yagami was the type of Omega illicit drug trials were designed around.

“Why did he punch you?”

“I implied he adhered to conical Omega stereotypes.”

“Does he?”

“No.”

“Then I surmise you wished to pressure him in some way. Was you question answered?”

“Yes.” I suppose I successfully proved Light Yagami is high-strung. Gold star.

“His ribs are hurt?” the small Omega asked, reaching down to unbutton Light’s shirt and take an assessment of the injury. L considered looking away, since Light probably would prefer preserved modesty, but he saw the nasty red covering the right half of Light’s torso. Fuck.
Near prodded the edges of the injury; the other Omega didn’t even flinch.

“Based on the fact that his scent lacks severe distress even after losing consciousness due to pain, he has likely been experiencing extreme stress for a prolonged period of time. This case will only add to that. Will he be able to hold up?”

“Yes.”

“Do you have evidence to support that?”

“He’s done it before.”

“You expect the Yggdrassills to target him.”

“They already have. Their mole within the NPA informed them of his plans to return to the hospital tomorrow. There is a 87% chance they will move on him within eighteen hours. Although I am concerned as to why they have not changed targets yet.”

“And you are prepared to intercept the mob’s thugs.”

“Yes.”

“And if they take him?”

“I won’t let that happen.”

Light cracked open his eyes to the rhythmic beeping of a heart rate monitor. There was surprisingly no pain anywhere in his body. Did I take the drugs?
He groggily tried to sit up, and felt a weight holding down his arm. The brunette blearily turned to look at the impediment, only find a pale hand grasping his own. He blinked a few times to make sure it was real. His eyes traced the hand up the arm, to the white-haired Omega sitting next to him.

Okay... Now I'm awake....

“Can I have my hand back?” Light asked, icily.

“Yes.” The man didn’t seem to care that Light was clearly not alright with having woken up next to a stranger, sitting in bed with him, holding his hand.

What the hell happened?

And then he remembered.

I punched L.

The Omega felt a satisfied smirk spread across his face. I punched the world’s greatest detective... maybe not my smartest moment, but completely worth it... The Alpha had certainly deserved it, but assaulting an officer (or famous detective) was an undeniably stupid move.

But none of that explained how an aloof, blue-eyed Omega had ended up in bed next to him.

His smile dropped. “Who are you?”

The blue eyes glanced sideways at him. “You may call me Near. You are Light Yagami.”

“What are you doing here? And why were you holding my hand?”

“You are injured.”
Amber eyes narrowed. Really? I hadn’t noticed. Light reached down, to fumble with the cuff on his bicep and get the monitor to finally shut up.

“That doesn't answer either question,” the brunette noted.

“It actually answers both. You are an Omega and, as such, heal faster when physical contact is incorporated into your treatment process. Therefore, I am here because you are injured and I was holding your hand because you are injured. However, if you want an expounded answer, Ryuzaki informed me that you had asked not to be touched, so I limited treatment to the minimal effective contact. And we are here in the guest room, because we are bunkmates.”

It took the length of that short speech for Light to conclude that he very much did not like Near.

Uh uh. No. Hell no…

You’re going to have to find some other potential victim to fulfill your Omega sleepover fantasy, L.

“I’m sorry,” Light bit out, keeping the minimal cold civility, “but that’s not going to work. I’ll take the couch,”

The brunette made a second attempt at sitting up, and found that the weight of the drugs in his system was even heavier than Near’s hand had been.

The pale Omega glanced over at him. “You have two fractured bones. It would be unwise for you to move right now. Though it was also unwise for you to initiate a physical altercation with an Alpha while injured.”

Is this person you’re way of irritating me to death, L?

“No offense,” Light spat, politely, “but Ryuzaki was telling the truth. I don’t like being touched and I’m certainly not going to sleep in a bed with a stranger. What time is it?”

“Eleven seventeen.”
I punched L at eight thirty... Damn Alpha.

“Did anything happen in the last three hours?”

“Matt identified the vehicle which the men who attacked your Beta probably used to flee the scene, and, using traffic surveillance, we’ve identified two of the three suspects. L is directing the NPA in a raid on their last known address now.”

“What were you working on?”

“Reviewing the autopsy report for Bianca Pillay.”

“And?”

The other Omega’s blue eyes narrowed, and he looked away. Wow, haven’t seen that look since university... you don’t like me either.

“Will the other four be alright?” Light pressed.

“Unknown,” Near replied not looking up. “You should sleep now, as you will need to repeat your charade at the hospital in the morning.”

You may be right, but I am not sleeping here...

“Like I said, there’s a couch in the dining room, that I’ll be fine on.” (Said couch had probably only been pushed out of the way to make room for L’s command center, but it was still plush.)

The brunette finally forced himself upright. and realized why this was a bad idea. Light grit his teeth and willed the room to stop spinning.

“You’re just going to fall if you try to walk,” Near commented uninterestedly, still tapping at the
Light really didn’t want to admit that the other Omega had a decent point. But the room was remaining stubbornly slantwise.

“What did you guys give me?”

“Watari’s field kit had an intravenous pain suppressant that was compatible with the oral prescriptions you are taking, in case you woke and needed a higher dose. He injected you at nine thirty-two, so you will likely experience dizziness, disorientation, and nausea for another six hours.”

Light dropped his gaze, hoping that the floor would at least hold still. *Seriously, people? Stop putting needles in me!*

“I looked at your bloodwork,” Near commented.

*Of course you did.* Light was determined to make it to that couch, even if he had to crawl there.

“Your injury aggravated your abandonment syndrome. Without your Alpha—”

“I do not have an Alpha,” Light hissed murderously, currently unable to strangle the white-haired freak, despite the massive appeal of the idea. “I. Am. Fine.”

“Your body disagrees. You may be able to recover this time, but over the next decade, your body’s innate healing capabilities will slowly taper off. If you do not wish to bleed out from a papercut at age forty, you will need to learn to accept physical contact.”

Light was able to whip (or more accurately lull, though he did mean to whip) his head around to glare at the smaller Omega.

“Do not fucking touch me.”
As long as he passed Rem’s tests, they couldn’t force him into rehabilitation. And if he ever found himself in danger of failing, there were more than a few uppers available from the same gentleman who procured his scent blockers.

Near shrugged. “Your psychosis may be justified, but it does not alter reality. Based on your records, I would expect you to be smarter than this.”

*That’s not going to work.* The room tilted dangerously and Light suddenly found his head smushed into the blanket at the foot of the bed. *How did I get down here?*

“You may be experiencing micro-blackouts, most likely from the mixed medication. Do you mind if I move you back to a normal position? I would prefer not to sleep upside down.”

*Don’t touch me…*

But audible speech was beyond him, as the sudden change in altitude fucked with his perception. *At least whatever Watari gave me is stronger than the pain…*

In an undefined amount of time later, Light found himself back on his pillow facing the white-haired Omega, laid down beside him, laptop nowhere to be found.

Light glanced down at their hands clasped between them and tried to tug his away. Near rolled his blue eyes.

“If L let Ryuzaki bring you back here, he must have high expectations for you,” Near said, “I would prefer it if you didn’t make our Dynamic look weak, by being too stubborn or scared to take care of yourself.”

Light wanted to snarl. *You are so damn lucky I already met my quota of ill advised punches for the day.* Near scooted closer.

“Yes this the part where you tell me how we Omegas have to stick together?”

“No this is the part where I forcibly treat you, so L doesn’t have blood on his conscious when you get yourself killed.”
Light didn’t even have the chance to retort before the other Omega leaned in to press his lips against his own.

*Oh goddamn it...* And the brunette wanted to fling himself off a cliff, because it actually felt good. There was nothing sexual, no tension, no pressure for anything to go further. It just felt good.

*You people just love fucking with the rules... And I thought I was the criminal in the condo...*

This type of Omega-Omega comfort fell into the category of public indecency, considered pornographic, if done in any venue where an Alpha (such as L) might scent the mixing pheromones. The punishments in Tokyo included mutual restraining orders between both Omegas, hefty fines, and any Alphas affected by the display were entitled to automatic mating interviews with either or both of the Omegas. This would only be legal if they were both in heat, at a stayhouse, or knocking on death’s door.

And even with the drugs, Light was pretty sure neither of those were the case.

Since Light’s motor function was near null, Near was responsible for their positions. The brunette waited for the albino to scooch closer and wrap their limbs together (at which point, Light would commit to his plan to murder the kid), but Near never did. He just held both of Light’s hands, kissing him on and off, until the drugs and exhaustion reasserted themselves.

*You had better have turned those fucking deadbolts...*

---

Chapter End Notes

Show of hands: Who else was stoked as all hell to see 'Primitive Liars' update? *miniature happy dance*

Ahem... Right.

So... This happened. I have a feeling I'm going to make some people mad with this one. But I was making you all too happy anyway, so perhaps this will remind you what a cruel, evil, all-the-cookie-eating author I can be.

To any of you who crossed over from HxH with me, you know that I have a
tendency to throw the kitchen sink at things, and, while that hasn't happened here, it hasn't been for lack of trying. (As in, those of you asking about Mello, he's here... somewhere.)

But I gave Light a sparring partner and a bedfellow, so he's most certainly in incapable hands :)

Good or bad, let me know how you feel about it!
A Vigilante's Weekend

Chapter Summary

In which the Alpha and Omega learn what not to do.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“Mr. Yagami?”

Light had just poured his first cup of coffee, and was in the middle of contemplating how best to burn the condo to the ground, when the elderly Alpha addressed him from behind. Strictly speaking, arson was not on his resume, but between L and Near, Light was willing to give it a go.

And, as of yesterday, Kira had access to L’s private network and was more than capable of solving this case on his own; so there was no reason the world’s gaudiest screensaver and his pet script kiddies needed to stay in Tokyo any longer. One less safe house, and maybe he’ll get his sugar-addicted, uniletter ass out of my city...

“May I speak with you for a moment?”

The Omega turned, coolly regarding the old Alpha, before nodding tightly. Watari smiled and called down the hall. “Matt? I recall you were flown here to chaperone. Kindly elevate yourself from AWOL to underachieving.”

Somebody’s feeling salty today...

The gentleman led Light into the dining room, still littered with victim profiles, and gestured for him to sit. The grumbling redhead entered a short second behind them, but quickly backed into a corner and stayed there. The brunette raised an eyebrow. Interesting... I guess the old man’s been like this all night...

Watari turned his attention to the Omega.
“Firstly, Light, how are you feeling this morning?”

Pissed off. “Alright. No worse than before… what happened yesterday. If that’s what you’re asking.”

It’s nice of you to cover your boss’s ass though. Seeing as how the detective had been allowed to verbally harass him, physically assault him, then leave him stranded in the arms of the most obnoxious brat ever born. A+ protective custody, assholes. This condo was full of dead men as far as the brunette was concerned.

Through the connecting door, Light could see the primary offenders, Alpha and Omega, ensconced at the main workstation. He smothered a snarl. Assholes who deserve each other.

Watari nodded seriously. “May I offer my sincerest apologies for Ryuzaki’s behavior last night? I understand that, while you initiated the altercation, his inappropriate comments played a significant role in driving you there. On behalf of L and myself, I am truly sorry for how the situation was handled.”

Light’s eyebrow twitched. On behalf of L, huh? Watari didn’t give him a chance to absorb the insult of L getting out of apologizing due to a fucking alias, before he continued.

“Now, while that is still true, your behavior needs to be addressed as well. It has become apparent that you have some trouble respecting authority. And, while in your personal life this would be none of my business, here, it directly affects both my colleagues and our productivity. And though Ryuzaki was obviously in the wrong, he is still the prime Alpha here and deserves your respect.”

What the ever-living fuck? Light’s eyes flicked over to the redheaded Beta in the corner to see if he was hearing this too, but Matt was busy staring at the ground. So you’re all in agreement? Well, then fuck you, too.

“No.”

Watari blinked at him.

“No. I do not automatically owe him respect him just because he is an Alpha.”
“Actually, you do. The same way you deserve respect as an Omega. The same way any living creature deserves respect for being alive and what it is. But that is merely tangential to what I was referring. However informally this task force operates, this is still a professional investigation. L is the lead detective on this case, Ryuzaki is his second in command. You do not have to like him, you do not have to tolerate slander to yourself, but you do need to respect the health and safety of everyone else here.”

You’re seriously putting the fault of this on me?

“I’m sure you’ve been taught how dangerous physical altercations with an Alpha can become? And how exponentially that danger increases when an Omega is involved?” Watari queried, grey brows raised sardonically. “No matter the reason, it is imperative that matters do not escalate the way they did last night. I myself was very near to attacking Ryuzaki when I sensed your distress. Of course, given my age and Ryuzaki’s training, should I had been so foolishly impulsive, I would be having this discussion with you from a wheelchair.”

Un-fucking believable. Light’s eyes narrowed as he donned a murderously polite smile. “So, as an Alpha, Ryuzaki is allowed to-”

“No,” Watari cut him off. “He is not. I have already reminded him of this same thing I am reminding you, the same lesson I teach four-year olds: Manners matter.”

The brunette ground his teeth, struggling to organize his raging indignance. Of all the arrogant…

“By ‘remind’, Gramps means yelled at ‘til he was blue in the face,” Matt interjected, before Light could explode, ignoring the look Watari shot him, addressing only the Omega. “If it makes you feel better, you’re getting off easy. Ryuzaki and I each got an hour ass chewing, followed by an hour seminar of ‘how-to-be-professional-around-Omegas-without-KO-ing-them.’”

Light blinked in surprise. That… actually does make me feel better… He studied the gentleman across the table critically. So I’m just last on Watari’s rounds of admonishment?

He glanced through the doorway, to watch L tapping away at the keyboard, completely unperturbed by the conversation happening next door. Near mumbled something, and L paused for a split second, before resuming his clicking.

The brunette Omega cautiously turned back to the old Alpha, who was graciously awaiting his
response from behind steepled fingers. *Alright, Gramps, you get a bye. L, however, does not.* He gave the man a stiff nod.

Matt and Watari, at least, weren’t working under a ‘blame the Omega for getting himself assaulted’ mentality. Light weighed the benefits of pointing out that Watari apologizing and berating all of them did not substitute for an apology from Ryuzaki, but bit back any further retorts on the subject. *I won’t be here much longer anyway.*

“Will that be all?”

The greying Alpha shook his head. “No, if you please, there is one other thing I wish to discuss.”

Light glanced over at Matt for a hint on the forthcoming topic, but the Beta just shrugged. Watari coughed to get his attention back.

“As you have probably gathered, we have unsealed two files as part of your background check. In case it wasn’t obvious, everyone here has read them.”

*Fantastic.*

“...”

“Mr. Yagami, I know how uncomfortable of a subject this is for you, so I want to offer you my personal assurances, that, no matter how inadequate Ryuzaki finds the police reports, unless it becomes relevant to the current case, the topic of your kidnapping and all subsequent events six years ago will be off-limits.” Watari paused, lowering his clasped hands to the table. “However, I would advise you to keep in mind, that should *you* wish to speak with someone about those experiences, everyone here has also had firsthand experience with Omega victimization. At your own discretion of course.”

*As everyone in this condo knows, it is none of their fucking business.*

“Then, if that will be all,” the Omega bit out, rising to his feet and heading for the door.

“One last thing,” the old Alpha amended, taking to his feet as well.
Light paused with his hand on the doorframe, trying not to growl in frustration; he was entirely done with this supervised tête-à-tête. And quite frankly, at this point, he’d’ve rather just stayed the night in the hospital.

He took a single, deep calming breath, before looking back over his shoulder at the tall Alpha. What?

“Jolly good wallop.”

Ninety eight minutes later…

*I’m really stupid enough to do this twice…*

For the second morning in a row, Matt was pulling into the Takanawa ambulance bay.

*At least they said they’d try waking Kite up today…*

Though, looking out the window at the approaching hospital, Light wasn’t sure he’d even be able to get in there to see it. The Omega’s lips thinned in suspicion at the situation ahead of them.

The ER bay was swarming with bodies. Nurses darted back and forth between half a dozen ambulances, with more zipping in. Doctors sprinted next to stretchers. Injured men and women clambered for attention. All effectively clogging the entrance by fifty meters in every direction.

“Ryuzaki, talk to us,” Matt muttered. “What the hell is happening?”

Their coms crackled to life for the first time today. (The raven-haired Alpha had been conspicuously silent all morning.)

“At 9:20 a.m., extremist Beta sect took terrorist action against the conservative Alpha community
in Northern Setagaya. Multiple reports confirm a city bus drove through the front windows of an Alpha elite gym before exploding. The injured were split between Takanawa, Ebara and Matsuzawa. While the group has been constitutively active in East Asia, we cannot rule out that this is merely a distraction orchestrated by the Yggdrassills. Proceed with extreme caution.”

The brunette Omega and redheaded Beta shared a dark look. Matt got them as close as possible, before the wall of urgent care prevented further forward progress.

“Don’t get dead,” the Beta suggested, as Light climbed out of the car.

Thanks nanny…

The Omega was immediately swept into the chaos, being herded downstream into the mouth of the ER. He was able to spare a single swift glance back at the disappearing safety of his ride, before Matt was forced to pull away to make room for another ambulance.

“Get inside Light. Your protection detail is in the entryway. I have the entire area covered.”

The Alpha’s voice in his ear was somewhat reassuring, but not nearly enough so. There’s no way this is a coincidence. The young brunette warily scanned the crowd, looking for anyone not injured or not staff, and whipping his head around whenever he felt eyes on him.

There’s a lot of fucking Alphas here…

This was why Omega medics were forbidden from working in the ER, since the inherent pandemonium already incited competition for the attendings’ attention. And pain, the universal cure for reason, led to more possessive, more aggressive Alphas, who would do themselves counterproductive harm, trying to defend the staff from each other.

As it was, more than one Alpha growled covetously, as the brunette crossed his eyeline.

Light did his best to avoid the gurneys, but there were so many injured that it was inevitable that he was forced close enough for the patients to grope deliriously at him, trying to pull him into their arms. He nearly face planted, getting clear of one particularly clingy female Alpha who mistook him for her son.
Congratulations L, you’ve successfully combined the three things I hate most in this world: criminals, hospitals, and wandering hands.

The Omega neared the open doors and discerned the three detectives waiting for him. They spotted him in the same instant, and began swimming up-crowd to rescue him, as yet another ambulance blared into the bay, pushing nurses and patients out of the way. The brunette felt the surge of pressure at his back, and tripped into a blonde attending.

Staggering back to his feet, Light looked for his escorts again and realized something was wrong.

Detective Ide had stopped in his tracks.

Detectives Ukita and Guren were still struggling to get to him, dodging the frantic med-staff, but the knowing look on Hideki Ide’s face, etched with horror as he held the phone to his ear, told the vigilante everything he needed to know.

They were here.

“Ryuzaki?” the Omega whispered, “If you can hear me, now would be an appropriate time to send in that S.W.A.T. team.”

Light shivered, trying to look everywhere at once. Damn it. He was too exposed.

L likely had the NPA vans parked behind the station. ETA three minutes. If the detective was intelligent, that’s all Light would need to last out here.

He saw Matt’s SUV reach the far side of the parking lot, completely out of reach, when the Alpha on a passing gurney seized his wrist.

Fuck.

Light yelled, yanking his arm back, but the monstrous Alpha had an iron grip. And was not at all injured. The brute applied his own force, pulling the slender brunette off balance. With all the other commotion, no one even realized that there was a struggling Omega, under attack.
“Light! Break his hold and get out of there!”

Light snarled. *Really, L? Cuz I was thinking of buying him some bloody dango!*

Unable to get free, Light pivoted back towards his attacker and brought his free elbow down on the bastard’s groin. *Pretend to be a fucking patient and I will make you a fucking patient.* (Nevermind that this was assuredly a trained professional who could ply him like a ragdoll.)

But Light had learned to never underestimate an Alpha’s lack of preparedness, when an Omega decided to actually fight back.

The man hissed and the brunette was able to wrench his wrist away.

Light stumbled back, shocked that that had worked.

“Light! Focus!”

His brain rebooted.

*Shit! Move your ass, Yagami!*

Of course, like magic, two more Alphas appeared on either side of him, clamping down on his shoulders.

“Gah!”

Guren and Ukita were close enough to hear Light yell and drew their weapons. But they were still separated by about eight gurneys worth of chaos. *Shit, they’re not going to fire in this mess…*

The Yggdrassils’ men yanked him backwards, towards an unattended ambulance, making easy work of deflecting Light’s struggles.
“Don’t let them get you inside a vehicle!”

The original assailant from the gurney overtook them, shoving obstacles (people and equipment alike) out of the way of his colleagues, causing the detectives to lose ground.

Well your plan fucking worked. That’s three… They’d have sent at least five. Where the hell are the other two?

Goddamn it L! Hurry!

Light thrashed in the two Alphas’ grip, trying to trip their feet. They were strong, but they hadn’t expected the Omega to fight this hard. (Not that it was making much of a difference.)

Schwump… schwump… schwump…

Oh fuck no…

Light understood the sound before anyone else did, probably because he was the only one drowning in an adrenaline-fueled nightmare.

The helicopter swooped low overhead, knocking a good portion of the crowd to their knees.

The Omega bucked wildly. The Yggdrassils weren’t dragging him into an ambulance. They’d been dragging him into open air.

L! Hurry the fuck up!

Light twisted and sank his teeth into the hand on his right shoulder. The Alpha snarled and slapped the Omega across the face.

Ung!
The sudden disorientation made it easier for them to maneuver him directly beneath the helicopter.

*Dannn it!*

* L!

The team in the helicopter lowered ropes, and Light realized the truth. *The S.W.A.T. team is going to be too late...*

He could vaguely hear L shouting in his ear, but it was drowned out by the whirring of the blades. The brunette resumed his struggles, a bit more desperately, but to no avail. At best the Omega was pissing the Alphas off.

So, Light fought harder, kicking at the Alphas’ shins, groins, whatever. He was able to get a single elbow free and use it to jab the fucker behind him in the gut with all his strength.

It was a challenge.

And the Alpha did not like that.

Not one bit.

His hulking hand thrust up around Light’s jaw, snapping the brunette’s head back and baring his neck. The bastard growled as he sunk his teeth into the Omega’s throat. Just above the mark L had left yesterday.

And just like when the detective had done so, the Omega instinctively froze. The Yggdrassill was able to yank him flush to his chest, preparing to hook them onto the line. But the blood quickly returned to Light’s brain, allowing him to process that this asshole had just marked him. Marked him.

Light snapped.
You fuckers want to play dirty? Fine. You just lost.

And the Omega did the ballsiest thing he could do.

He threw out his scent.

Not the scent of fear. Nor that of distress, nor anger (all of which Light was feeling in spades, though). And had a certain raven-haired detective not lain his entire body against him yesterday, accelerating his biorhythms, it never would have worked.

No, the scent that diffused through the air was that of a raw Omega…

Just hours from heat.

The scent of an Omega aroused.

An Omega willing to mate.

In the middle of a sea of Alphas.

A dark smirk flowed across Light’s face. Deal with that, assholes.

The Alpha on Light’s right, who’d been reaching for the cables flung from the chopper, froze mid-grasp. The Alpha on Light’s left, who still had his arms around the Omega, snarled and clutched the prize closer to his chest.

In fact, every Alpha in a three meter radius snapped to attention. And the circle of interested parties was growing.

Light let desire flood his system, adding to the arousal. And then tilted his head submissively for the Alpha on his right. All to piss the other one off.
And it worked.

It might have been the worst plan he’d ever had, but Kira was not going to be dragged onto a crime-boss’s bloody helicopter by a cohort of meat-handed, Alpha fucktards. *No fucking chance.*

Even if that meant starting a riot.

The imperative to be aware of one’s scent, particularly during the days leading up to a heat, was forcibly impressed upon every Omega from the very first day they presented. The instant a Beta chaperone smelled it, he was required to bring the Omega to a stay house. With age, an Omega could exert some control over his scent, buying more time before he was in danger of an unwanted Alpha noticing. But Omegas were warned *never* to brandish preheat pheromones where multiple Alphas could react. It was a capital offense for an Omega to purposely do what Light had just done.

If the Omega survived long enough to be charged.

Because when an Omega indicated a willing desire to mate, just before their heat, in the middle of a crowd…

The Alphas went fucking nuts.

The Yggdrassils’ men might have been trained, but the brain’s chemical reaction to heat scent was like cocaine. Inescapable. And the chance to fuck an Omega in heat was what these assholes lived for. Kira had seen the evidence.

… and Light was counting on it.

It took a single heartbeat before all hell broke loose.

The abductor who had hold of Light’s waist roared in defiance, daring the nearest Alphas to challenge his claim.
Not that a single person heeded the warning. Within two seconds, six new Alphas were upon them. Light felt Yggdrassill hands still grasping at him, but the kidnappers now had to contend with a surge of new challengers. Including each other.

A torrent of fresh adrenaline flooded his system, completely numbing his ribs. And Light fought.

It might not have been what the detective had had in mind, but that S.W.A.T team was going to be essential in Light’s revised version of the plan.

Two minutes…

Somehow, Light was able to squirm out the monster Yggdrassill’s grasp, while the bastard was busy protecting his own back.

Only to be caught immediately by another Alpha. This one wasted no time, yanking the Omega’s collar out of the way and biting down hard on Light’s bare collarbone.

Ugh! Stop chewing on me!

The pressure on his shoulder only lasted a second, not long enough for Light to strike back, before yet another Alpha ripped him away. The brunette could feel the sting of several dozen scratches forming, as the animals clawed at him.

By this point, every Alpha in the ER bay had caught the scent. Any Betas caught in the mix had gotten the hell away from the mess. It was incredible how rapidly the mayhem turned to utter strife.

All to claim an Omega.

Light kept pushing teeth away from his face, trying to turn every Alpha against the Yggdrassills men and put some critical distance between himself and the abduction team. The two males who had originally caught him were still locked in battle with each other, but the third accomplice was in pursuit. And close.
Stumbling over an abandoned stretcher, Light saw the flashes of red, before he processed the sirens.

L’s team had arrived.

The Beta staff of the hospital had scrambled out the way, leaving room for the squad cars to smash through the empty stretchers. *They’re efficient, I’ll give them that.* This was the type of disaster that emergency professions trained for. And dreaded. Light saw the EMTs out of the corner of his eye, as he ducked the clutches of a muscle-bound female, rolling out hoses.

*Shit…*

He whipped his head around, mid-dash, looking for an escape. The hospital doors were firmly sealed, to prevent the riot from spreading inside. (The entire building had probably gone into lockdown in under thirty seconds.)

Light flung his gaze the other way and spotted Matt’s SUV careening towards the mob. He skidded to a halt. The detective must have given the Beta new orders. As in: Get. The. Omega. Out.

*Thanks, L…*

His momentary pause was unfortunate.

“Argh!”

Pain raced up his forearms, as Light smashed into the pavement. *Ugh! Damn it.* Light gasped as he felt a weight crushing down on him. The Alpha planted one hand on his lower back to hold him, and wound his other fist around the top of Light’s trousers, clearly thinking of nothing but mating the Omega right now.
“Get the fuck off!”

The Alpha had time to yank the fabric, nails gouging deeply into Light’s back, before the Yggdrassill’s third man drove a knife into his skull.

The pressure on Light’s body disappeared for half a second, long enough for Light to roll to his side, before the new Alpha was pinning him down again, knife to his throat. The position, though in no way funny, made Light smile.

As he brought his knee up into the Alpha’s rock hard groin.

The bastard gasped, losing his grip on the blade, leaving a small slash across his throat, but Light was able to wriggle out from under him.

His most recent attacker had cut a swath of breathing space in the mob, leaving several bodies in his wake, but it was enough for Light to get his bearings.

And run.

L had asked him yesterday, if he had to run, could he? Today Light found out that he had answered honestly. Yes, yes he could.

The young Omega made a mad dash for the vehicle. (Which, in hindsight, he never should have gotten out of…) The nearest Alphas licked at his heels, but hallelujah for To Oh’s barking mad, tennis coach, who believed sprints were like tic tacs.

His body collided hard with the black paint, and Light growled as he fumbled with the door. He really needed to practice this more: how to open a fucking car door in a goddamn hurry.

In his panic, everything - the snarls, the thrum of the chopper, the blare of the sirens, his guardian detective - had all melded into a dull roar, as Light’s entire world narrowed to getting inside the car. He finally gripped the handle and launched himself into the passenger seat.

“Drive!” Light screamed.
Matt floored it, reversing them away from the few Alphas who had conquered their surrounding area and now hounded the Omega’s scent, before the passenger door even sealed. Light barely got his shin inside before the force slammed the door shut. The Beta skidded into a reverse 180, shifted into drive, and floored it again.

Light gasped for breath, aching chest finally catching up with him. That oxygen was lost at the jolt of a heavy thump on the roof. *Fuck!* The Yggdrassill’s helicopter was improvising, trying to crush the SUV’s wheelbase, curtailing the Omega’s escape.

Matt swerved, aiming to get out from under it, but there weren’t many escape routes left.

S.W.A.T. vans clogged the hospital exits. The redhead was forced to hop the curb to avoid the disembarking forces. Light ducked below the window, expecting the police to shoot at their tires.

But the shots didn’t come. *L must have ordered them to let Matt leave. But that doesn’t fix fucking helicopter situation…*

*Do you have a plan for that L?* Light was finally able to interpret the continuous garble from his com again. (*L seemed to be yelling at someone else right now, though.*)

The Omega leaned forward onto the dash, staring up. His makeshift Beta was going to have to break out some hitherto unknown drag racing abilities if he was going to get them clear.

But… Light’s brow furrowed. It was disappearing east? *They’re fleeing?* The Omega squinted; *why aren’t they chasing?*

He twisted to see the sky behind them through the sunroof and grinned. *You are good…*

Apparently, the world’s greatest detective had had the foresight to sent the NPA with its own air support. Light collapsed back. (*If L hadn’t sent that chopper, he and Matt would have been sitting ducks for whatever backup team the Yggdrassills dispatched, as that bird could have pinpointed their position anywhere they ran.*)

The SUV skidded around the corner and the Omega spared a single glance back at the hospital he hadn’t even made it into.
God I hope the NPA gets cuffs on those bastards.

Light pushed his shoulders back into the seat, trying to make more room for air in his aching lungs. Great fucking plan L. His ribs hurt worse than ever. As did the thousand scratches, hundred bruises, and half a dozen bite marks. Rem was going to murder him.

The SUV accelerated onto the highway, before the redhead Beta finally turned to face him.

“What the literal fuck!?!?”

“He should be arrested.”

L continued to ignore his mentor, in favor of combing deeper into the backgrounds of the three assailants they had in custody. The two that’d been caught in the riot were still raging in their isolation cells, bashing at the padded doors. (The third had died on scene, killed by his own comrade.) It would be several hours before the detective could get anything out of those two.

The other pair, that had been in the helicopter, had had to be chased to ground (literally). At the end, the two Alphas had jumped, sacrificing the chopper, in a futile attempt to escape on foot. One had died in the fall. The other had several broken bones, but was the only assailant suitable for questioning.

“L, eight people are dead, six of whom were innocent bystanders. The NPA knows that he was at the scene; the protection detail actually saw him on site.”

The world’s greatest detective glanced at the side screen, that showed Light and Matt still in the black SUV, driving in circles. (Both windows were open, as the Beta fought taking action on the lingering preheat pheromones.) It was killing L to not to bring the Omega back immediately, then burn through an entire first aid kit mitigating the damage Light sustained by following his orders, but the Yggdrassills were still locked on their position.

The raven-haired Alpha would just have to vent his frustration interrogating a couple henchmen in the meantime. Starting with Kiichiro Osoreto. Born Min Kwang-Kwang. Korean national... Disowned by the Khangpae at age 17... specializes in extraction and sniper operations... traveled to Minsk twice in the last year...
“L Lawliet! I will withhold sugar until you answer me,” Watari snapped. (The old Alpha had made this threat before, and, recalling the debacle in Rio, neither party found it remotely funny.) “You and I both know that Light Yagami purposefully baited those Alphas. You need to be prepared to give sufficient justification for why he is not in handcuffs right now!”

L deliberately took a long drag of his sucrose-saturated tea. *This was not Light Yagami’s fault.*

“Because it was self-defense. We both know he was in mortal danger at that hospital, and if he hadn’t used his scent, he would either be dead or good-as dead right now.” The detective refocused on the imminent interrogation. “Tell the guards Osoreto should remain restrained.”

Watari dutifully relayed L’s instructions to the prison guards outside the captive Alpha’s cell, before returning to the topic of their guest.

“Maybe, But the NPA doesn’t. And, if, heaven forbid, his name is leaked to the press, not even you will be able to protect him. He *will* be arrested. And yes, he would probably be acquitted. *Eventually.* But it would be a miracle if he survived to trial.”

“The NPA has already issued a press release on the incident, claiming the heat scent originated from the traumatized mate of one of the Alphas injured in the bombing,” L noted, watching his suspect be carried into the interrogation room. He ran his thumb across his bottom lip. *Broken clavicle… Easy leverage…* “Have them put the laptop on the table. And Light Yagami’s protection detail is being debriefed on the need for secrecy as we speak.”

“And what about Yggdrassill’s man?” Watari countered.

“Detective Ide has been informed that his contact on the Internal Affairs Task Force was fraudulent. As he was unaware of his service to the mob until today, I’m certain it will be at least three months before he opens his mouth again. None of the other leaks can vouch for Light Yagami’s whereabouts this morning without exposing themselves.”

The older Alpha sighed audibly. L took another slurp of tea.

“And what do you plan to do about Light’s present condition?” Watari pressed, “He’s in preheat. Should he really be returning here?”
“His mating representative prescribed suppressants. I am ninety eight percent certain today was a result of conscious release. Therefore, he is still early enough in his cycle to circumvent his heat entirely. Let them know we’re ready.”

Watari typed out a quick command and the guards left Osoreto alone, cuffed to the chair. The laptop sat dark and ominous on the table; the criminal glared at it warily. L leaned back, letting the Alpha stew.

“His father is furious,” Watari added.

“Yes, I expected Soichiro Yagami would not be pleased.”

The older gentleman moved to stand directly at the younger Alpha’s side. “L, he’s an Omega. After your bungled attempt to interrogate him yesterday, you need to ensure that you do not become attached. Unless you plan on staying in Japan permanently.”

“It was only botched because Light Yagami has the temper of an old goat. And broken ribs.”

“His past associations with the Yggdrassill family were neither voluntary nor recent. Pressing him for information was ill-advised. You risked further traumatization of a victim. Combine that with his actions today, and you will see that the last thing that boy needs is the stress of investigative field work.”

L growled as he turned to face the grey-haired Alpha. “He was mated to Shishio Yggdrassill’s son. Consensual or not, his knowledge of the family is far more extensive than he has led us to believe. I will not allow the fact that he is an Omega prevent me from finding the truth.”

“That does not give you the right to beat a confession out of a civilian under your protection.”

“You already addressed this topic extensively at 4:17 a.m. this morning. And, I will remind you again, he initiated the fight. Would you be lecturing me if I had kicked an Alpha or Beta?”

“That’s not-”
“Put Osoreto on.”

*Enough.* L checked Light’s tracker and feed again, making sure the Omega was still en route. *Matt, stop circling and just get him here…* The image of the brunette diving into the passenger seat, battered and bruised, replayed in the detective’s mind. *We’re not doing that again.*

Watari sighed and walked back to his station to open a line to the laptop sitting in the interrogation room. L promptly tuned out any other grumblings from the peanut gallery.

The suspect jerked up, eyes widening, when the large gothic ‘L’ appeared on the screen in front of him. *So the pack didn’t tell you that I was working this case…* *Interesting.* The detective was no longer concerned in hiding his involvement, since the Yggdrassills would know it was the only logical explanation for why Light Yagami remained at large.

“You know who I am. And I know who you are. We can therefore skip to more interesting topics. What can you tell me that will convince me not to put you on the first plane to Guantanamo? The joint task force between the CIA and MI8 is positively frothing to see you and your surviving associates disappear forever. I, at least, will talk to you.”

“I have nothing to say to you.”

*Expected…*

The man had training. True to form, the Yggdrassills had hired an independent team from abroad; all professional, all wanted in multiple countries. It was a double edged sword. Professionals had no ties to the pack, so none of their crimes could be linked back to the Yggdrassills. But, that also meant their loyalty was for sale. For the right price.

And L could usually afford it.

“That is unfortunate,” L drawled, honing in on his captive’s eyes, “It’s even more unfortunate that I have so little patience or else we could do this again tomorrow.”

The detective changed the display, so the prisoner was now watching a little Polish girl, both feet kicking on a swing, laughing as an exhausted nanny fretted over how high she was getting.
The effect was instantaneous.

“I WILL GUT YOU-”

“Yes, yes, yes. Blood, gore, death. Anything of interest you’d like to add?”

The raven-haired Alpha sipped his tea.

L rarely had to threaten suspects. He’d learned long ago that a criminal’s own imagination was far more effective. Every criminal had his own compilation of dirty little secrets, and the world’s greatest detective excelled at finding them. After that, it was a simple matter of presentation; the less imaginative criminals took a little longer to supply the unfathomable horrors waiting for their loved ones, but eventually they all got too the same place. You honestly believe I would harm her...

The hulking Alpha glared impotent daggers at the webcam for a full eighteen seconds. L was prepared to move on and wait for the second Alpha (who incidentally had a bonded Omega secreted away in Minsk) to regain his sanity.

But then…

“What do you want to know?” Osoreto muttered.

L smirked.

“Everything.”
stuff. But then Saturday happens, and it's back to work.

It may be that you disagree with Watari's lecture to Light. I was unsure how much our little Omega deserved to be yelled at, but Watari takes no prisoners. Also, for reasons unknown, I always imagined Matt addressing Watari as Gramps. No rational explanation...

Oooh! And those three hospitals are appropriately located in Tokyo. Google Maps did not fail me!

Anywho let me know what you think! There are some minor edits in the works for the previous chapter, to flesh out that fight a little bit more, so if this fic updates without a new chapter posting, that'll be what happened, but next chapter is 93% done, so it should be less of a wait than this time.

Thank you everyone who's reading! You peeps are awesome at keeping me motivated!
The Prodigal Omega

Chapter Summary

Aftercare, for when you're L's man on the ground.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

When the Omega Civil Rights Movement was finally assured of its victory, supporting politicians made a concerted push to develop formal, legal, and consistent definitions describing an Omega’s relationship with the Alphas in their lives. Activists claimed terms like ‘mate’ and ‘marriage’ were too often synonymous with ‘rapist’ and ‘slavery’. In order to redefine the law, the United Nations appropriated a system developed by a then relatively unknown, British scientist.

His classification system, based on the distinctly different metabolisms Omegas experience, became the basis for legislature in nearly every country on Earth. His work became doctrine, and his terminology became slang. According to Taylor’s Law, an Omega would always be defined as Foreign, Prospective, Claimed, Mated, or Bonded to any given Alpha. The following is an excerpt from his most famous paper:

""

→ Foreign

A foreign Omega is defined as a person entirely unknown to an Alpha. Alternatively, a foreign Omega is an Omega claimed, mated or bonded by a different Alpha.

→ Prospective

Prior to this most audacious Reconstruction we live in, prospective Omegas did not exist. It is the greyest of my classifications and can represent anything from coworkers to friends to siblings. Most simply, to be prospective, the Omega does not belong to another Alpha, but is not unknown to the particular Alpha. Mating interviews have been designed around prospective Omegas, helping to facilitate the transition from foreign to claimed, without the Omega being sold, stolen, or raped.
In polite society, the final three tiers of Alpha-Omega relations overlap. An Omega can be claimed, claimed and mated, or claimed, mated, and bonded. I consider any other combination of those statuses to be unnatural, due to the biological stress it puts on the Omega.

→ Claimed

A claimed Omega is defined as protected by the Alpha who has claimed him. It is acceptable to refer to the Omega as the Alpha’s, and, by our new Prime Minister, to say the Alpha is the Omega’s. A claimed Omega is not necessarily the mate of the claiming Alpha, but, it is expected that, while claimed, the Omega will not mate with any other Alpha. Some Alpha parents still claim their Omega children, though it is considered a tasteless practice in most Western nations.

To claim an Omega, an Alpha leaves a claiming bite, usually on the neck or shoulder near the scent glands. Parents tend to mark the wrists. Teeth indentations are critical to make a claim. When the Alpha bites down, the Omega’s immune system reacts to the hormones in the Alpha’s saliva, incorporating the Alpha’s pheromones into their own endocrine system. Afterwards, the claimed Omega is drawn to the Alpha whose bite he wears, since the Alpha’s scent is now recognized as ‘self’. A claiming bite fades after about eight days. Longer, if the same Alpha has claimed the Omega repeatedly.

Society recognizes a claimed Omega by their scent, which contains a minor, but notable similarity to their Alpha’s.

Of note, for both legal and biological reasons, an Omega should never be claimed by multiple Alphas. Unless the Aphas themselves are also mated. In those cases, the Omega’s body recognizes the Alphas as a single entity. But, taking multiple Alphas’ claiming bites is dangerous, as the different claims can lead to temporary autoimmune disorders, until one of the marks fades. In the mildest cases, the Omega suffers headaches, cramps, and fever. In the severest, death. Multiple claims are typically limited to prostitutes and drug addicts. Because the Omega has no clear Alpha, they are often psychologically unstable and more violent than usual. Thus, multiply claimed Omegas are looked upon with disgust. Employers may have grounds for dismissal, lesses may have the right to evict, and Alphas should be expected to shun an Omega who has been claimed by multiple persons.

→ Mated

(It took the National Diet of Japan eight years of enacting and repealing legislation to come to the current definition of ‘mated’.)
A mated Omega has been in contact with an Alpha or Beta’s sperm. As the most fertile of the Dynamics, Omegas react to sperm the most strongly. Even if the sperm is ingested or dermally administered (semen-marking), the Omega’s body will react, and this change in metabolism classifies them as ‘mated’. This distinction was made in response comments make from the Public Defender’s Office, who argued that rape victims should not be considered mated to their rapists. (The legal compromise held, though unsatisfactorily; rapists who wear a condom are charged differently than rapists who do not.)

When mated, the Omega’s scent shows a marked change, usually called ‘deepening’, and, of course, if mated anally/vaginally, the male/female Omega can become pregnant. (Notably, this classification makes it impossible for a female Beta to mate an Omega, since they do not produce sperm. But a male Omega can mate another Omega, abet this is currently illegal.) The physiological effects of mating can last up a year. Moreso, if the Omega was impregnated.

→ Bonded

Bonding is still a relatively poorly understood phenomenon. The bond is hypothesized to be an aetheric connection, and physicists have spent many years and many grants trying to prove it, though its true, physical nature remains elusive.

As far as our society is concerned, a bonded Omega is defined as mated for life. (In this context, the term ‘mated’ does not related to sperm, but to a life-partner.) Curiously, a Beta cannot bond an Omega, but a Beta can be bonded by an Alpha.

Omegas can be threatened into bonding, but, on some level, the Omega must give consent. Anti-Omega Right’s groups used this as proof, that Omegas were not being mistreated, since they agreed to be bonded to their Alphas.

When a bond is formed, the Omega’s pheromones become permanently tuned to the Alpha’s scent, and the Omega carries it with them for the rest of their lives. The Omega and Alpha become mentally and emotionally closer to each other than anyone else. They are more aware of each other’s emotions, needs, and, in rare cases, thoughts. They become dependent on each other, such that if one partner is lost, the survival of the other is unlikely: in Britain, 62% of Alphas commit suicide, if their Omega is lost, and 99.9% of Omegas die, either by suicide or by ‘wasting away’. In all of history, I have only found been twenty two confirmed cases of an Omega bonding a second time. Nineteen of those were to the first Alpha’s twin.

To form a bond, several conditions need to be met:

- The Omega must be in heat.
The heat makes the Omega more receptive to Alpha pheromones. The metabolism is slowed in some respects (such that the Omega does not need to eat or sleep as often) and sped up in others (the Omega’s fertility skyrockets, and their desire for sexual release is elevated to an extreme degree).

- The Omega and Alpha must claim each other simultaneously.

Typically, Alphas do not allow themselves to be claimed. Being claimed is a submissive act, and intolerable under most circumstances. (Alphas who regularly submit, become increasingly sickly. On the rare occasion that an Alpha is raped, or otherwise fully dominated, their hormones risk becoming poisons in their own bodies.) But for bonding, a claiming mark by the Omega is a beneficial trade-off for the Alpha. A moment’s submission, for a lifelong partner. After bonding, Alphas tend to allow claiming bites from their Omegas, as mutual claiming can strengthen the bond.

- The Omega must be dropped.

For humans of all Dynamics, being ‘dropped’ is the state of retreating into one’s own mind. The prevailing theory, is that conscious retreats into its ‘nothing box’. It can happen when hypnotized or during deep meditation. Or, most often, when reaching sexual climax. Almost all bonds are formed at the moment of an Omega’s orgasm, when the brain’s processing power reaches a minimum. Because of the psychological gravity associated with bonding, it is nearly impossible for an Alpha to bond an Omega outside of sex. To do so, would require the complete and unconditional trust of the Omega. Such that he could be dropped deeply enough into his subspace by an Alpha voice alone, without the force of an orgasm.

""

This classification system is taught in grades as early as kindergarten, along with corresponding classifications for Alphas and Betas. The British specialist, from whose work the system was derived, was Lind L. Taylor. He received the Nobel Prize in Medicine the year before he was arrested for illegal human experimentation.

Regardless, the fact that Light Yagami wore six different claiming marks, was more than a little problematic.
Light stepped out of the shower, wincing at the myriad of aches floating around his body.

They’d only gotten back to the condo an hour ago, after he and Matt had driven for nearly half the day, switching vehicles thrice, when L had finally deemed it safe for them to return. The detective’s paranoia wasn’t unfounded either. Even after the second vehicle swap, a dark sedan tailed them through Shinagawa-ku, until L sent Watari in an undercover squad car to intercept.

When they’d arrived at the garage, there was a new set of problems to contend with. Light’s chocolatey smell was still tinged with preheat pheromones. Matt had kept the windows down and air blasting all day, but, riding up the elevator, the Beta had glued himself against the wall and held his breath, so as not to jump the Omega. Light was grudgingly impressed with the redhead’s self-control.

Unfortunately, there were two Alphas waiting upstairs. And no matter how solid L and Watari’s self-control, if they caught Light’s scent, there would be a repeat of this morning.

To prevent unwanted copulating on the entryway floor, both Alphas had relocated onto the covered balcony, joined by Near’s Beta, as Matt and Light arrived. The two had been quickly herded into the guest bathroom, while the white-haired Omega doused their trail with aerosolized bleach.

Light had gotten an unfortunate eyeful of the redhead, as the Beta had charged headlong into the shower, shedding clothes left and right. Matt had scrubbed himself raw, removing all traces of secondary scent, then joined the quarantine on the balcony.

Before the brunette had hopped into the shower, Near had offered, (and Light had readily accepted) two heat-suppressants, plus a mild (legal - psh ) scent inhibitor. Thereafter, brunette Omega, spent the next thirty minutes soaking under the hot water, partly to wash away the heat scent, and partly to unknot his aching muscles.

So now, clean, unscented, and thoroughly scratched up, the vigilante was ready to get back to find out what the hell had come of the sting operation. Sleep be damned.

Zzz… zzz… zzz…

Light checked his phone. Kiyomi Takada calling. The brunette rolled his eyes. The female Omega occasionally invited him to hang out, outside of mating interview hours. Obviously, he was in no
In addition to Kiyomi’s call, he had four other missed texts. All from ‘Soichiro Yagami’. The Chief had been calling every twenty minutes since the hospital incident. *Not to be confused with any of the other fucking ‘incidents’ this week*... The Omega had offered patient reassurances to his father the first eight times. After that, he mandated they switch to text for ‘safety purposes’.

Light silenced the device, deciding it was L’s turn to pacify his father. His headache was strong enough already.

The Omega gingerly shrugged into borrowed Beta clothes. *Ugh*... The fabric rubbing his stings was nearly as bothersome as the amount of resources the Yggdrassills were putting into taking him. Why were they so set on him? There were five other exact matches to the victim profile, and dozens of close-enoughs, but the bastards were still coming for him.

*In fucking helicopters*...

By this point the Yggdrassulls had to have dug up his history, just as L had. In their books, he was damaged goods. It made no sense for them to put this much vim and vigor into hounding him.

*... unless they know I’m Kira.*

That could be... catastrophic.

The brunette shook it off - *they haven’t gone after mom and Sayu yet* - and ducked out of the bedroom. As much as he wanted to investigate that bed right now, he needed to know what was happening.

He wandered down into the workroom, stringently avoiding nest Near was tucked into, in the dining room. (The pale Omega had disguised its nature, building it out of files instead of blankets, but Light wasn’t fooled.) He suspected the boy had chosen that place to hunker down out of spite, so that if Light made good on his threat to sleep on the sofa tonight, he’d still be surrounded by Near’s scent. *Brat.*

(Theoretically, Omegas got along with each other better than other Dynamics, but other than Sayu and Takada, Light just found them annoying. *Not that Alphas are any better...*)
Entering the command center, he was unsurprised to see L sitting alone at the workstation, still processing evidence. Matt and Watari could be heard in the kitchen, and Near’s Beta (Gevanni?) was probably hovering around his charge.

Light walked over to his usual seat, next to the detective. Considering the damage inflicted in the a.m. of today, the Omega was past feeling bitter about their spat yesterday. For the most part.

The men that had attacked the Takanawa ER were displayed in interrogation rooms across the top. The giant who’d bitten him was on the left, and the Omega brightened at the Alpha’s soon-to-be permanent handcuffs.

But, the detective was ignoring the criminals, in favor of…

“What are you doing?”

The raven-haired Alpha didn’t even flinch at the accusatory tone, alternating between typing and thumbing his lip. “You should be resting.”

Light frowned at the live feeds of three different Omegas on the detective’s main screen. None of them matched the victim profile. Stalking? The male on the right began to strip, clearly unaware he was being filmed. Golden eyes narrowed, disliking the intense way L’s dark eyes studied the unsuspecting Omegas.

Is this what you do, L?! Watch Omegas get naked?

“Who are they?” Light demanded.

Again, the Alpha didn’t bother to answer, just closed all three windows and pulled up the report from Detective Aizawa.

Light felt his blood boil, pheromones turning vengeful as he rapidly lost the battle to control his anger. You fucking watch them! That is a disgusting abuse of your power!
“You are in no condition to fight right now,” L commented drily, correctly interpreting the scent Light was emitting. The Alpha scrolled through the interrogation transcript, letting the Omega seeth.

_You think you can get away with this?! You_ Light inhaled sharply. _You probably can, can’t you? You’re sick!_

“No!” the brunette snarled. He finally received the courtesy of the Alpha’s full attention as L spun to face him. “Not until you explain who those Omegas you were watching are!”

The detective regarded him blankly, doing that fucking running of his thumb across his lips again. The silence dragged on. Light’s patience was almost up before L answered.

“They are the bond mates of three of the Alphas who attempted to kidnap you today.”

Light jerked backwards.

That was certainly not what he’d been expecting. _Alright… That still doesn’t explain why you’re watching them undr-no!_ The pieces fell into place.

“You’re arresting them? They didn’t do anything!” Light shouted.

L was once again in danger of being clocked, but the Alpha didn’t refute the accusation.

“You fucking racist, egotistical, unjust piece of Dynamic filth. They were probably sold to those assholes as children. And then threatened until they bonded with the same bastards who bought them! And now you’re going to arrest them because their fucking slave drivers finally got caught!”

The detective was unfazed by his screaming, and that only incensed the brunette further. Light felt several sets of eyes on his back, but right now they were immaterial.

_L is justice?! Are you fucking kidding?!!_
“I believe that is the most colorful language I have heard from you, Light Yagami,” L finally stated calmly. “Your supposition of their history is unfortunately, strikingly accurate. However, their bond mates are either dead or facing attempted kidnapping charges here in Japan, as well as murder and rape charges in twelve other countries.”

The detective sounded so matter of fact. Amber eyes widened in horror. *Fuck.*

This was the ‘L’. *He’s probably done this a hundred times before…* The brunette practically vibrated. *You said you want justice? You’re a fucking liar.*

“Those Omegas were *kidnapped* and *coerced* into bonding,” Light hissed, “They don’t deserve this!”

His fingers folded themselves into fists, as he glared down at the perched Alpha.

Unfortunately, it wasn’t L he wanted to hit. The world’s greatest detective was following the rules. Sadistically ratified by every member of the United Nations, before the court, bonded partners were one and the same.

It was the law.

And it was wrong.

The detective nibbled the corner of his thumb, contemplatively. “They are fully bonded, Light Yagami. Their mates are facing life in prison at best. Do you really think that those Omegas will have any desire to live without contact from their Alphas ever again?”

“Yes!”

*Our lives do not fucking revolve around you bastards!*

Of course, empirically, Light knew better. Kira spent considerable resources trying to get bonded Omegas out of the country and into support facilities, before he took down their mates. It almost never worked. *But that doesn’t mean they deserve lethal injection!*
The law disagreed.

The Omega spun on his heel, intending to walk out of the condo and not come back. *Maybe as Kira, I can get to them before-

“Me too.”

Light jolted to a halt. *What?* He stood frozen, glaring at the elevator, trying to process those words.

“What?”

“I agree with you,” the raven-haired Alpha stated, “Those Omegas, though probably aware of their mates’ illicit activities on some level, have never willingly been party to any of their crimes. However, as a detective, I am obligated to arrest them. But, if they go missing before my agents arrive…”

Light twisted back to see L shrug, putting the monitors to sleep.

“It would be a considerable waste of my intellect, tracking down wayward Omegas, don’t you agree? Even subpar local authorities can handle that tedium. I prefer to busy myself with problems of actual interest.”

The Omega’s lips parted in shock. He understood.

“You’re helping them escape…” he breathed.

The raven-haired Alpha stood and slouched his way past the frozen brunette, stirring the scent of fresh coffee. “I did not say so.”

Light couldn’t even find it in him to turn. “You are helping them hide…” he whispered, still staring at L’s empty workspace.
“I did not say so,” L repeated.

Light heard the plop of sugar cubes dropping into a new cup of tea. He composed himself enough to face the detective.

“Ryuzaki, are you telling me that, the world’s greatest detective runs an underground railroad for enslaved Omegas?”

A grin threatened to cross his face. You know that's illegal right? (Of course, that hardly stopped Light himself.)

“I am not telling you anything,” L retorted, and Light detected amusement beneath the monotony. “Off the record though… No.”

Wait… What? But- The detective smirked at the Omega’s confused expression.

“We just happen to have someone on payroll who does.”

Oh. You think you’re funny don’t you?

“They’re still bonded,” Light pointed out.

Whatever off-the-grid Omega rescue organization L was in contact with needed to be prepared to deal with the depression and illness that accompanied an Omega’s loss of a mate. And that was hard enough without a bond.

L smirked. “I am aware.”

“How many survive without the Alphas?”

“Ninety three percent commit suicide before their third unpartnered heat. Another five percent die
So many… But those statistics matched Kira’s data. “And the remaining two percent?”

“Alive,” the detective confirmed, coming to stand before him. “Though the degree to which they’ve rehabilitated is variable.”

L focussed on the taste of his tea. This closely, he could smell the fresh blood still welling out of a couple of the deeper scratches Light was hiding beneath the borrowed sweater. You need to rest.

“Who runs this organization?” Light demanded.

Insistent, aren’t you?

“A friend,” Matt interrupted, causing the brunette to jump.

Grr… The redhead had hovered behind the Omega, fully prepared to intervene at any point during the tirade. Looks like Watari’s lesson took… Though, even if Light took a swing at him, the Alpha wouldn’t be able to bring himself to retaliate this time.

Not with the Omega as injured as he was.

Light was clearly dead on his feet and needed to be frogmarched back into bed.

The Beta glanced at L. “Is he coming?”

The detective threw an annoyed glance at the redhead; even if Light was running on empty, he was still sharp. He caught the slight scrunch of the Omega’s eyebrows. Careful Matt… he’s on to you…
“No,” L responded, before Light could jump to any further conclusions. “He has twenty-four hours to get them out and make it to the waypoint in Bern.”

It was going to be close. Mello had the jet, but it was still several hours off the grid to get to the actual sites where the Omegas were being held. The NPA had already informed INTERPOL of the extraction team’s arrest, and the agency had dossiers on two of the mates already. The blonde Alpha was going to have a treacherous foot race getting in and out of Courmayeur, and again in Lublin.

“Is this your mate?” Light asked Matt.

“No!” The Beta’s face matched his hair now, and Light snickered.

L’s lips quirked. *And whose fault is that?*

Matt shot Watari, of all people, a dark look before disappearing back into his haven of screens. *One might think he was an Omega, the he nests builds with computers…* L schooled his features as the Omega turned back to him.

“How have you interrogated the suspects yet?”

The younger man was clearly set on a full debriefing before allowing anything else to happen. *Plus four percent to your likelihood of being Kira…* Unfortunately, the stubbornness was taxing the Omega more than the Alpha could allow right now.

“I will make you a deal, Light Yagami,” L suggested. *And I fully expect you to take it…* “You are in need of first aid. If you allow yourself to be treated, I will answer any questions you have about today’s events.”

The detective didn’t wait for the Omega to answer before he stalked down the hallway to the sitting room sofa. *You’ll be too curious not to comply.*

He was right.

Light followed him into the front room and warily sat, next to the detective crouched on the low
sofa. L waited patiently, anticipating the Omega’s opening question. *What would Kira want to know first?*

“So? Have you interrogated the bastards who attacked me?”

*Yep, definitely what Kira would want to know.*

“For the most part. Two of the criminals were killed while authorities attempted to apprehend them. Of the other three, I have thoroughly questioned two of them. The third was the one closest to you when your scent spiked and has not calmed enough to be worth talking to yet.”

Watari appeared presently, bringing in the first aid kit, plus an extra roll of gauze. The old Alpha gave L a stern look, but didn’t linger, perfectly aware the Omega was not in any danger. Having known the detective for all his life, his mentor could read the guilt L felt about this morning, despite its being a probable outcome, and knew the younger Alpha needed to do this

Because, right now, Light was L’s Omega.

Not his mate. But a part of the temporary pack they’d inadvertently formed in this safehouse.

And thus L’s.

Nowadays, the concept of a ‘pack’ had become mostly synonymous with ‘family’. Since Omegas were buffered from civilization by their chaperones, and since Betas had largely fought successfully for independence, an Alpha’s pack typically only consisted of their mate and younger children, and perhaps a few extended relatives. It was only in the mob and separatist organizations, that packs still existed as large, hierarchical groups.

Or, apparently, in the odd investigation team.

They had all been subconsciously slipping into roles that balanced each other. (Such as Near choosing the seats the older Omega vacated, tagging along.) L was fairly certain neither Matt nor Watari had noticed, though they would soon. Near probably had.

As the most dominant Alpha present (and the detective actually in charge), L was the natural head
of the pack. The others were his responsibility. And Light had been injured following his Alpha’s orders.

It was incredibly fortunate that Light hadn’t submitted to any of the foreign Alphas. Even though, cognitively, no one in the condo adhered to the primitive etiquettes, things would have become extremely tense had the brunette submitted to another Alpha and then returned to L. Especially after having refused to submit to the raven-haired detective the night before. (Fifty years ago, as the prime Alpha, L would have had to either cast Light out or reclaim him. Probably painfully.)

But, the Omega hadn’t submitted to anyone. And was thusly entitled to the protection and care of his Alpha. *Even if you are a disrespectful, uncompromising wildling. Prodigal Omega indeed.*

Which translated into the raven methodically coating each scratch with corticosteroid, antibiotic cream and gently wrapping the deeper cuts in soft gauze.

As intelligent as Light was, the fact that the brunette let the detective take his hand without resistance, indicated the Omega recognized the underlying psychologies at play, and accepted that this was neither dominant nor sexual, but necessary for mutual coexistence. *You might also just be too tired to fight justified medical attention…*

“What did you learn from them?” Light asked, intelligent amber eyes locked on L’s face.

L carefully pinched Light’s wrist between his thumb and forefinger, lifting the Omega’s hand palm-up, so that he could dot antiseptic on the cuts there.

“They are an independent team, operating out of Korea. They were hired by an anonymous third party to abduct an Omega entering the Takanawa Hospital at 10:30 a.m. They were told they’d recognize the target by his watch: a custom OMEGA Speed-Master Professional. And by his high fuck-ability.”

“I take it that’s a direct quote?”

“Indeed. Other hand,” L ordered, finishing with the Omega’s right hand.

Light extended his left palm, and the Alpha repeated the procedure, noting the watch in question. The brunette flinched as L gently dabbed the cotton swab against the deep gash stretching from knuckle to wrist. *You’re taking that oxycodone.*
“Furthermore, they were instructed to deliver you to the Ueno Zoo, where presumably, you would be handed off to a secondary team. Matt is tracing the source of their funds, though there’s a seventy-two percent chance it will lead to an anonymous, closed account.”

“How much was I worth?”

“Two million Euro.”

The Omega snorted, amusedly. *You think you’re worth more? I agree… Kira is likely worth ten times that to the Yggdrassils.*

L added a second layer of bandage to the gash, and released Light’s wrist.

“You will need to remove your shirt.”

Light froze. The detective rolled his eyes.

The Omega was wearing one of Matt’s tight-fitting, long-sleeved tees, that made it impossible for L to access the injuries beneath. Hopefully, Light wasn’t going to be combative about this, because the Alpha was dead serious about treating every nick and bruise.

The brunette hesitated, sniffing the air for any hint of ulterior motive, before tugging the striped shirt over his head. *Damn, he’s hot*… Even black, blue, and red as he was, Light Yagami was a magnificent specimen of an Omega. Under any other circumstances, L would have been thoroughly aroused right now. But the mottled rainbow of colors around the right ribs and the angry red of the gashes across the rest of the torso, left L less horny and more concerned.

He lay a gentle hand along the brunette’s side. “Do these ribs hurt any worse than this morning? Any trouble breathing?”

“No,” Light snapped, and the detective removed his hand.
“Will you be too cold if we put an ice pack against this swelling?”

“I'll be fine. Is Hideki Ide in custody?”

L rubbed his lip, assessing Light’s torso. *So stubborn... But you deduced that Ide was the mole? Impressive... “No.”*

“Why the hell not?”

“Detective Ide was not intentionally leaking information to the Yggdrassills.”

The Omegas glared daggers. The Alpha quirked his head, distracted; *so when you smell more cherry-y than chocolatey, you're more confused than angry? That's a handy tidbit.*

L turned the brunette’s wrist so he could see the pavement-burn on Light’s forearms. The cuts weren’t deep, but nearly all the skin had been rubbed raw. He could feel the Omega cringing at the stinging, and distracted Light with the tale of how Detective Ide had evaded arrest.

“Seven months ago, the NSPC formed an internal task force, dedicated to cleaning house in the NPA. The members were selected in secret and reported directly to the Director of the NSPC. Three months into the investigation, one of the taskforce members, Takakazu Komatsu, was ordered to form a network of trusted officers in the Kanto prefecture. Hideki Ide, along with six other officers, met with the Deputy Director Koreyoshi Kitamura of the NPA. Kitamura instructed the officers to begin reporting to Komatsu. Based on several of the Yggdrassill’s previous crimes, I guessed that there was a source of information coming from Komatsu or someone directly in his chain of information. Digging into Komatsu’s background, I discovered that two days after the Deputy Director called meetings with the officers, Takakazu Komatsu’s dog was recovered by a rescue society. Komatsu never came to claim him, despite continuing all his other usual activities. From this, I concluded Komatsu was in fact missing. I instructed your father to search his residence, and the body was discovered buried beneath the floorboards in the basement Thursday morning. As for the Kanto network, a Yggdrassill informant assumed Komatsu’s identity and took the initial meeting. None of the six detectives, including Hideki Ide, had ever met Komatsu before, and the meet was arranged by the Director himself, so they believed they were reporting to a legitimate representative of the NSPC’s task force. Relating to this case, when the informant learned that Detective Ide had been assigned to your protection, the Yggdrassills ordered him to plant false information, leading Ide to believe that Guren Ichinose was suspected of being the mob’s mole. Ide was told that a kidnapping of you would be staged to draw out Ichinose, simultaneously moving you to a secure location. When I ordered the S.W.A.T. team to mobilize, your father immediately called your protection detail, and Ide, being the point man, became aware of his mistake.”
“You got all that from an abandoned dog?”

L smirked. “I told you I was that good.”

The Omega rolled his eyes.

Watari reappeared with an ice pack, which L handed to Light to press against his ribs. L had swabbed most of the scratches on the Omega’s chest and abdomen. But the Alpha was deliberately avoiding the bite marks on Light’s neck. (His preferred treatment method was likely going to be met with heavy resistance from the patient.)

“Spin,” L commanded, deciding to deal the brunette’s back first.

“And the informant?” Light asked, shivering against the cold on his side.

“Presumably, he is dead. His cover was burned as soon as the plan to kidnap you was enacted, and he hasn’t been seen since. He has either fled the country, or, more likely, the Yggdrassills have disposed of him. In the unlikely event it becomes necessary to locate him, I would advise the NPA start by dragging the bay…”

L’s answer trailed off, as he ran his fingers gently over the scratches just starting just above and dipping below the hem of Light’s pants. The detective had been utterly and helplessly furious, when he’d seen that Alpha attempt to mount the Omega. He estimated Light had been within three seconds being raped in the middle of the parking lot. **Too close…**

“How voraciously did Watari chastise you this morning that you now feel the need to coddle me like this?” the brunette queried, face hidden.

L snorted. **Feeling exposed? Probably.** This was obviously the Omega’s way of reminding the Alpha that he was supposed to behave.

“Watari’s lecture is entirely irrelevant to the present. I am ‘coddling’ you, as you say, because I sent you into the field, knowing what could happen. This is my responsibility.”
“How is it irrelevant?” Light challenged.

*You can’t bait me when you’re half naked and shivering.*

“Watari’s main concern was the high potential for disrespect in an Alpha-Omega relationship. However, the type of relationships to which his fears would apply are those of acquaintances, friends, or mates. Since I was interrogating you as a suspect, it was logical to off-balance you with provocative statements. And, if you remember correctly, you, Light Yagami, punched me.”

L felt the muscles in Light’s back stiffen as the man reacted. “Suspect? You still think I am connected to the XoXo ring?”

*You’re thinking of hitting me again.*

“No. But you are connected to the Yggdrassils,” the raven replied, flatly, “You were mated to Ryuk Yggdrasil for four months. Someone as intelligent as you would have observed far more than the color of the walls during that time.”

L felt more than saw the righteous rage flow through the Omega’s body at the sound of his former mate’s name.

“So Watari’s assurances that this subject would remain closed were empty?”

The Alpha bit his lip. *You asked.*

The detective had been more than a little surprised (and angry) reading Light’s files yesterday. Ryuk Yggdrassil was currently ninth on the United States’ FBI’s Most Wanted List, and had been there for eight years. The thirty-seven year old Alpha was one of the primary reasons the Japanese branch of the Yggdrassil family had become so powerful in the previous decade. He had been Shishio Yggdrassil’s eldest son and heir, until six years ago, when he’d been convicted *in absentia* for the kidnapping and rape of Soichiro Yagami’s Omega son. He was rumored to be hiding somewhere in Siberia.

Light was justified in his anger.
“I believe Watari stated that if you wished to speak on the subject, you may do so. You asked why Watari’s lecture to myself was irrelevant, and followed that inquiry with another regarding my reasons for suspecting you. I believe that satisfies the requirement of you broaching the subject. Unless you’d prefer I lied to you.”

The Omega remained silent.

L dusted his hand across the bruise that wrapped around the Omegas side. It was uglier than it had been yesterday.

“As for yesterday, I am sorry for kicking you.”

Light scoffed, “So you’re not sorry for implying I’m a brainless, mafia baby-maker?”

“Only insomuch as it led to exacerbation of your injuries. As I said, it was relevant to uncovering your full connection to this case.”

The hand Light was using to hold the ice pace curled into a claw’ L was sure there was a textbook definition of exasperated fury on the brunette’s face. But, the conversation was helping distract the Omega from the pain.

“So you think I’m one of them?”

“No,” the detective admitted. “I think you’re Kira.”

To the brunette’s infinite credit, Light didn’t hesitate.

“What’s Kira?”

So… You already suspected me of suspecting you… The Omega’s only tell was the slight increase in tension between his shoulder blades. You truly are a first-rate actor… If you ever go Broadway, you’d make an excellent Hamilton.
“Kira is a hacker who has been working against organized crime in Tokyo for the past two years,” L answered drily, “More specifically, Kira is the man who infiltrated the Pondu Shipping Yard Wednesday night to rescue Haru Hayashida. Though I’m sure you already knew that.”

“Obviously, I know. You showed me. But a hacker?” L imagined Light had carefully calibrated this tone of disbelief, over years of practiced deception. “Dad’s mentioned they were getting anonymous tips from someone every now and then. I’m guessing those are from the Kira you’re talking about. You think the guy from the rescues and the tipster are the same? And that he’s me?”

“Mmm, yes. Though, obviously only the first rescue, since you were sitting beside myself, when the second occurred. You do realize that excuse is becoming quite tired? You cannot blame your father for everything, Light.” The detective put light pressure on the Omega’s shoulder “Spin around.”

L expected the brunette was too busy calculating his defense, to worry about being embarrassed and argue the Alpha’s request. Sure enough, Light complied, swiveling back to face the detective. Damn it, he’s still hot…

“It’s not an excuse if it’s true,” the Omega snapped, meeting the detective’s gaze.

Liar.

“That doesn’t change the fact that you’re an Omega who spends his nights picking apart the underworld,” the detective smirked Perhaps you’d like to confess?

The brunette’s expression was most entertaining. Like a mosaic. I count honest shock, feigned indignance, arrogant confidence... and pain... Damn it. His humor faded as he studied the Omega’s only remaining injuries.

“Regardless, Light, we need to deal with these.”

L’s fingers brushed along the five sets of teeth marks coloring the Omega’s pale neck. (There was the sixth set that the detective himself had made, but that one was barely bruising.) Four of the bastards had broken skin, and those were the wounds most likely to become infected.

Those injuries were also the most irritating to the Alpha.
If Light would let him, L would like to cover the bites on his neck with claiming marks of his own, before applying antiseptic and bandages. Marks like this… were not favorably looked upon. Particularly in Japanese society. If seen in public, Light would be judged harshly.

The Omega was apparently aware of this fact and jerked back from the touch.

“You can barely stand to look at me, can you?” Light spat, “Even though you watched the whole damn thing, your instincts are telling you that I am a worthless whore and that I should be fucked and then disposed of.”

So I guess we're tabling the Kira conversation?

“Mmm, not at all actually,” the detective answered, running his thumb across his lips. “If you’d allow it, I would like to overwrite them.”

L had the satisfaction of seeing genuine surprise cross Light Yagami’s handsome face.

“Why?” the brunette demanded, suspiciously.

“I have already answered that question. You are wearing claiming marks from five different Alphas because I used you to draw out the Yggdrassills’ team. Until the marks fade, it will be exceptionally stressful for you, both intellectually, knowing how society perceives multiple claims, and instinctively, fighting your body’s reaction to being dominated by so many Alphas, but kept by none. I have no doubt that you could handle it, but, as I have just stated, this is my fault.”

The chocolate scent was agitated again. “So you think that gives you the right to claim me?”

“Not at all. But it does give you the right to use my status as an Alpha to remove any doubt that you are, as you say, a whore, and to help ease any physical suffering, as you will only have to contend with one unresolved claim, as opposed to six.”

The brunette Omega sat immobile for several long seconds.

L took it as a good sign that Light hadn’t refused immediately. Or punched him again.
“Do you do this for all your assets?”

“No. Other than Near, you are the first Omega that I have worked with personally. Though, I suppose, in other cases, when an Omega was injured as a result of my investigation, I have paid all medical expenses and arranged for various support mechanisms.”

L thought about it. You’re only the second person I’ve ever left a claiming mark on… Weird. The raven stared off into space, until he remembered he was waiting for a response from the brunette. He glanced over at the younger man.

Light sat rigidly, obviously unsure.

Then…

… very, very slowly, he nodded.

_Huh…_ The detective hadn’t expected Light to be rational about this. _Also weird_…

L let a knee fall to the couch, so he could lean towards Light, and slowly wrap a hand around the back of the Omega’s head, softly pulling him forward. He used his other hand to angle Light’s chin, planning on dealing with the mark the Yggdrassills’ man had made first. This bite was the most offensive of the set. Probably to Light too.

The Alpha refused to be overwhelmed by the nervous cherries and chocolate invading his senses, as he licked the spot, readying Light for the coming bite.

The Omega shook beneath his hands, and L focused on exuding a calm, collected scent, with no hint of desire or victory. Very slowly, he sucked a mark of his own atop the other, causing Light’s shivering to escalate. Only once the brunette had adjusted to the feeling, did the raven add his teeth. He bit just shy of breaking skin, but hard enough to supercede the other Alpha’s claim.

Once he was satisfied that the mark would take, L relaxed both his mouth and his hold.
He pulled back to assess how the Omega was fairing. Light’s eyes were closed, and his jaw clenched. Same with his fingers, curled into claws on his knees. The Alpha had to quickly review Omega’s history, to avoid feeling insulted.

L waited for the brunette to look at him, before moving forward.

“Ready for the next one?”

Light didn’t answer. Just jerked his head in affirmation, before closing his eyes again.

The raven-haired Alpha repeated the procedure, pressing his lips to the bleeding mark on the brunette’s collarbone, then biting gently. Since the skin was already broken, it was inevitable that Light would feel more pain, and the Omega’s hands jerked up to grasp the Alpha’s arms, squeezing tightly. L let him hold on, sinking his teeth a little deeper.

The detective was not a fan of the taste of blood, but combining it with the smell of chocolate made it more bearable. It longer this time, for the Alpha to be satisfied that the mark was now his, but at least the brunette shook less.

When he was done with the second, he didn’t have a chance to check with Light that he was alright, as the Omega snapped at him.

“Just do it.”

By the time the Alpha moved to the fifth mark, Light had stilled completely beneath his hands. The violent shaking had exhausted the brunette entirely. L made his final mark on the pale skin, having to hold the Omega upright.

L pulled back, and leaned Light against the back of the sofa. He quickly dabbed more antiseptic onto the cuts that were bleeding and applied bandages to hide all six claiming bites.

The Omega didn’t even open his eyes. You don’t handle submission very well, do you? The detective de-perched, and made to return to the workroom, giving Light some breathing space.
“So you’re going to mark me and just walk away?”

And why the fuck did I let him?! Oh right, because he suspects I’m Kira…

The detective had just admitted to being onto him, and pretty accurately at that. Submitting was the sharpest left turn Light could make, as it contradicted the profile of Kira’s personality. Kira doesn’t submit. Unfortunately, that left Light with six claiming bites tingling irritatingly at his throat.

They were necessary… in more ways than one… suck it up, Yagami.

Practically speaking, the Omega hadn’t had any other choice. He’d felt the migraine pulsing behind his eyes since getting out of the shower, and, once the Alpha had made him sit, the brunette had recognized his body’s reaction to being incorrectly claimed. Something he’d felt once before. The raven’s suggestion had saved him from what would have been a very nasty hangover.

That didn’t mean Light liked being claimed by the world’s greatest detective.

“Trying to confuse me with guilt, Kira?” The Alpha glanced back over his shoulder and smirked at him.

Oh fuck you, L.

Light’s scathing retort was cut off.

Zzz… zzz… zzz…

Light glanced down at his phone. Huh?

“Who is calling you, Light?”
“Kiyomi Takada.” Again…

He frowned. *Why would she be calling twice? She should have left a message the first time…* They rarely spoke outside of mating interviews, though not for lack of persistence on her part. The vigilante’s eyes narrowed. *The timing is too odd…*

He flicked his eyes up to L.

“You should trace this call.”

The raven-haired Alpha blinked, before taking Light’s elbow and dragging him back to the workroom.

“Watari, we need a trace,” L commanded.

Watari raised an eyebrow, but quickly set to work. Matt and Near both appeared, forming a loose circle around Light. It took the elderly Alpha half a ring to get situated, confirming the brunette’s suspicion that they had already bugged his cellphone.

L gave the Omega the nod to answer. Light pressed speakerphone.

“Kiyomi?”

“Light?” The female Omega’s voice sounded… terrified.

*Shit…*

“Kiyomi? Are you alright? What’s wrong?”

“Light… Please….” she begged, before the her sobbing abruptly disappeared.
There was some scuffling on the other end, and Light could hear muffled cries. *Fuck...*

“Hello, Light Yagami,” a new voice sang. It was young, male, and Alpha. “You’re a hard Omega to reach.”

Notes!!!!!! For all those who need a recap like I did. Here's what L knows. (Light's evidence base is a little different since he started from a different point.)

Evidence:

- From the lab in Hong Kong
  - 8 Omegas kidnapped
  - New drug being developed
  - Tokyo mafia pulling strings
- Crime Scene #1
  - The compound unsub #1 had used to knock out the guard
    - Untraceable, non-lethal dose
  - Video of first rescue (cameras and ship)
    - Male, athletic
    - Sustained injury
  - Testimony of guards from first rescue
  - Pictures
  - Box FR18B0X and associated records
  - The voice recording from unsub #1’s police call
    - Male
  - Description of voice from FREY’s Famous Pizza
    - Male, witness who might recognize
- Crime Scene #2
  - The compound unsub #2 had tried to use on the other guards.
    - Same as first compound
    - Untraceable, lethal dose
    - Bullet fragments
  - Video of second rescue
    - Description: male, tall, lean, athletic, injured
    - Murderer
  - Pictures from second rescue
  - New cargo box
  - Rape from second rescue
    - Condom used (no DNA)
- Crime Scene #3
  - Bug found on Kite Gingsu
• Vehicle used to assault SUV (burned)
• Traffic surveillance

• Victims
  • Five Omegas now being treated for XoXo poisoning (one dead)
    ▪ Bacterial strain releasing the drug
    ▪ Antibiotics needed to treat
  • Profile

• NPA and the dirty cops
  • Komatu’s dog

• No one other than Light and Watari (and maybe Matt and Near) know L’s identity

• Kira
  • Emails
    ▪ Short, untraceable
    ▪ Faked IP address (using coffee houses around Tokyo)

Suspect Pool and Associated Evidence

• Shishio Yggdrassill (kingpin)
  • Crimelord; incarcerated
• Ryuk Yggdrassill
  • Light Yagami case files
  • Reports of being in Russia
• Koko Shintaro
  • Interaction with Light (video recording)
  • Mob boss status, no convictions
• Demegawa
  • Video - planting bug on Kite
  • Financial, physical evidence
  • Corpse
• Kite Ginsu’s Attackers - Unsubs #1, 2, 3
  • Traffic surveillance idents
• Hideki Ide (spy)
  • Reporting to National Public Safety Commission Internal Affairs Taskforce
• Fake Takakazu Komatu
  • Presumed dead
• Extraction team - Kiichiro Osoreto, Unsubs #4, 5, 6, 7
  • Two dead, three in custody
  • Bonded Omegas
• Light Yagami
  • Kira?

Chapter End Notes

So remember back when the longest chapter in this thing was 5000 words? Those were simpler times...

But yes, poor Light got a little banged up last chapter so that had to be dealt with. And L had some serious territory to mark. Of course neither of them will take the day off to do it, so the investigation ticks on. And to clear up some confusion about
Light's status: he was mated and claimed by the Alpha who kidnapped him, both of those statuses now gone. He was partially claimed by L during the fight, though L didn't bite hard enough to leave a full claim. And he was bitten, and so claimed, by five different Alphas during the last chapter. They tried to mate him, but he got away. After this chapter, Light is officially claimed by L, though that status will fade in about a week unless L leaves new marks.

And Hideki Ide was the stick in the mud in the anime, so he'd never be working with the Yggdrassills. But he'd easily be an informant for the Japanese version of Internal Affairs.

As always, I love all your feedback. Comments are like chai tea with a chocolate covered gummy bears on a Sunday morning. Thank you for reading!!
Light glared at his phone.

He took a deep breath, steadying himself to deal with this asshole in a way that wouldn’t get Kiyomi killed.

As in, he hung up.

“LIGHT!”

“So… I count three people screaming at me…”

“He’ll call back,” Light affirmed, silencing the noise and taking a quick survey of the room.

Trust me.

Watari and Matt both wore looks of utter horror. Gevanni simply frowned and took a subtly more defensive position around Near, like he was worried the older Omega’s insanity might rub off. On the other hand, the younger Omega could have been reading Webster’s Dictionary for all he was
fazed, absently twirling white locks around his finger. *Brat…*

The raven-haired detective, similarly, had not reacted, other than to tighten his grip on Light’s elbow. If Light turned his head, he knew he’d find L’s face mere inches from his own. The Alpha was so close his coffee-and-apple scent enveloped the Omega entirely, and, strangely, conveyed support.

*He’ll call back.*

Light swept an expectant thumb across the screen.

*Ring... Ring... Ring...*

His lip twitched. *Gotcha.*

“Well that worked well...” Amber eyes narrowed. The Alpha was angry, but in control. *So not your average pococurante hothead...* That would narrow the suspect pool immensely.

Out of the corner of his eye, Light caught Watari miming stalling tactics, as the old man continued attempting to track the call. The Omega pursed his lips. He was talking to either a Yggdrassill directly or one of their intermediates; that meant finding them would be difficult. *Unless they wanted to be found.* The caller was probably using a prepaid burner and probably some false tower associations and maybe even a spacial buffer for kicks and giggles. *That’s what I’d do.* Watari’s best bet would be to simultaneously triangulate and isolate background noises to get a rough geographic profile - after filtering out Kiyomi’s whimpering, of course.

*I’ll need to buy him at least ninety seconds.*

“My father told me never to talk to strange Alphas,” Light quipped.
There was a brief pause on the other end, before:

“Hahahaha-ooh-ahahaha-oh-oh-aha-ha-ha.”

So… crazy? The man clearly had a fascination with his own voice, laughing and laughing, and by extension, nettling Light to no end. But the maniacal guffaws were extending the call time.

Which, boded ill. The Yggdrassills knew the NPA had custody of him, and they knew any call to his cell would be traced.

*Does he not care if he’s found?*

The lunatic finally got a grip, and Light took a breath.

“We-heh-hell, my pretty, little Light, you could say I’m not so strange. You could even say I’m a friend of a friend. This cutey certainly certainly seems to like me.”

The muffled cries from the background contradicted the Alpha’s words.

Caramel eyes narrowed. The kidnapper was blowing through emotions too quickly. He had gone from pissed to manic to deadly calm in under seventeen seconds. *Translation: psychopath.*

“Alright, friend,” Light hissed venomously, angling to antagonize the man again, “Who are you and where is Kiyomi?”

The Omega was staring too intently at the phone in his hand to take stock of the rest of the room, but the scents of concern were becoming distracting. Even Near was emoting mild warning signals. Only the espresso scent nearest him remained constant. (And L’s support was probably the only reason the phone hadn’t been ripped from his hand yet.)

“Oh dear…” the caller tutted, “Such spirit. You’re in desperate need of some finishing school. But to answer your question, *breeder*, you don’t know me. But we’ll be meeting soon enough. Now, put L’s man on the phone.”
Light flicked his gaze up to L’s dark eyes. The raven held out his hand for the cell, but the brunette shook his head.

“Who?” the Omega hedged.

_They don’t know that the real L has me._

“Well?” the Alpha snarled, then shifted moods yet again, slipping into sing-song jeering, confident in his own cleverness. “I know L sent someone for you. So put him on… I know he’s there…”

Light quickly covered the mic.

“They don’t know you’re here in person, but they’ll dig into whoever answers’ background,” he breathed, so only L could hear. “Watari’s alias is already built for that.”

The detective obviously wanted to argue, but the brunette ignored him and offered the phone to his grey-haired mentor.

The caller on had resorted to repeatedly calling out: “Hel-loooo-o?” interspersed with “Tick-tock!” _Shut up, asshole…_

The seated Alpha glanced at L, who nodded permission, reluctantly. Watari and Matt smoothly exchanged places, the Beta now managing the trace. Light snorted. _Must be nice to have help…_

Watari took proffered the phone from Light’s hand, then stalled for as long as he dared - six ballsy seconds - before greeting the kidnapper.

“This is Watari.”

Light sidestepped towards the redhead, wanting to get an estimate of the trace’s progress. He barely registered L moving with him, keeping that hand curled firmly around his arm. As expected, the Yggdrasills weren’t making finding them easy. Though, they weren’t making it particularly difficult, either. _Thirty seconds…_
“Oh ho! L’s own personal lapdog? How exciting! I thought I’d be talking to some low level Beta! But Watari himself… My-oh-my…”

The brunette closed his eyes, against the man’s obnoxious enthusiasm. *Alpha… classic narcissist… likely recruited for his charisma and physical strength… uneducated, but organized… could someone like that work in a team? No. Certainly not with another Alpha… So not part of a pack. That means freelancer. So he thinks he’s running his own op. And, the Yggdrassills will be watching safely from the sidelines, waiting for the opportune moment to capitalize…

Damn.

The Omega noticed his free hand had moved to idly rub at the itchy bandages covering his claiming marks. If the world’s greatest detective hadn’t been in the room, Light’s fingers would have been flying across a keyboard, finding out why the Yggdrassills had resorted to such gauche strategy. *They took Kiyomi to get to me? That doesn’t make sense. The NPA has never traded Omegas…*

Light’s head snapped up.

*He’s not using a voice shuffler… based on his accent, he’s from Kyoto. Odds are, he has some prior arrests… which would mean a record. ID him and we can predict his MO…* Light whipped over to the lead detective, but….

“Run voice recognition. Focus on ex-cons coming out of Central Japan.” L whispered to Near.

The brunette gave the detective a blank stare, as the younger Omega slipped into a second work station. L gave him a small smirk. *At least he’s quick.*

“-Now as the Omega can tell you, we have his girlfriend here,” the other Alpha continued, “She’s a beauty, but, unfortunately, just isn’t Light. Therefore, I am proposing, the two of us here, make a trade. My beautiful, virginal, female Omega, for your handsome, virginal, male Omega. It’s a good deal. This bitch doesn’t talk back.”

Light stiffened. *Virginal?*
Before he could react, L’s hand slid down his forearm, finding the scent gland on his wrist and rubbing small circles. Light’s surprise at the action stayed his next comment. Which he immediately realized was L’s intention. The detective didn’t want to capitalize on their opponent’s faulty intel.

Yet.

The brunette’s mind ran an accelerated analysis. His instinct would have been to inform the Alpha that his employers had fed him misinformation and try to turn him on the Yggdrassills. L had to be thinking the alternative, of letting the man make the mistake of trusting the pack, leading to a critical error when he realized they’d left him out to dry. Both options had even odds.

The detective’s thumb pressed a little harder into his wrist.

_Fine. We’ll do it your way._

“You are asking for a hostage exchange,” Watari replied evenly, ignoring the silent exchange behind him.

The vigilante snorted. _No. He’s asking for the payday of his life—_

“Light?”

The Omega started at the hushed tone, but met L’s dark gaze head on.

“Figure out how they got to Kiyomi.”

Light’s jaw locked. _Sneaky bastard._ Obviously, this was something Kira could do. _You’re trying to ensnare me right now?_ Well, just because Kira could find out how Kiyomi Takada had been taken, didn’t mean Light Yagami couldn’t.

“She was at the mating interviews...” he breathed back, “They could have had her for up to forty-eight hours.” _Damn._ That was a long fucking time to be in Yggdrassill custody. “Shintaro would have had to have met with at least two Omegas. I’d be willing to bet Kiyomi was the other.”
The kidnapper’s cackling cut off any reply L might have concocted.

“Oh-ho! You’re so smart, Watari. I like you. Now, listen up. That mouthy, little bitch is going to drive himself to the north side of the Nihonbashi Bridge. He will come alone-”

“No,” Watari rebuffed, resolutely.

This seemed to shock the kidnapper. “No?”

“No,” the old Alpha repeated, “Firstly, we have no guarantee that you will release Kiyomi Takada unharmed. And secondly, sending an Omega alone would be far too dangerous. Any Alpha in the vicinity could take notice.”

The corners of Light’s mouth quirked; the former Queensman had played a smart card. The Yggdrassils would be royally screwed, if their poor, defenseless test subject got snapped up in a completely unrelated kidnapping. Or worse, got taken by an opportunistic rival organization.

“You’re going to let the bitch die?” the psychotic Alpha taunted, “I thought you were supposed to be the good guys. You spend all this effort to make us look like boogeymen, and here you are, sacrificing poor, innocent Kiki.”

Light grudgingly acknowledged Watari’s experience, hearing the Alpha slide smoothly from aggressive to reconciliative tactics without missing a beat, “If you release Kiyomi Takada now, we will consider leniency-”

“Oh but Watari…” the man interrupted, “I didn’t know you liked to haggle. My momma taught me the secret. Never accept an offer you didn’t propose. So, you being such a fine upstanding gentleman, how abouts I make you a counter offer? Sweeten the pot, hmm?”

Light stiffened.

“I’ll give you two Omegas, for the price of one,” the kidnapper sang, “Even you, Watari, have to admit that’s a pretty tempting deal.”
“Are you confessing to kidnapping a second Omega?” Watari asked, feeling the situation out.

“Kidnapping!” the voice shouted, before whining sadistically, “You wound me. She was out on the streets. All by her lonesome. We had to take her in. Like you said, it’s dangerous for an Omega, all alone out there. We just helped a girl out…”

Light’s keen mind connected the dots. The Yggdrassills wouldn’t skimp on a move this bold. They’d make sure they’d have enough collateral to force the NPA (or world’s greatest detective) to deal.

“They have Sayu,” he murmured.

This time, he got four startled looks. Light slid his gaze right. L remained focused on the phone in Watari’s hand. You already guessed. The brunette felt time slow. Or maybe his brain just kicked into overdrive. Sayu...

“Did you figure it out?” the sing-song voice chirped. “Come on Watari, I thought you were supposed to be a smart cookie… Don’t tell me the rumors lied?”

“You took Sayu Yagami,” Watari stated, not looking away from Light.

“Ding, ding, ding!” the madman cheered, “We have a winner!”

There were more muffled cries in the background; listening closely, Light could discern more than one person making them. Soon though, the voice returned, low and deadly.

“Now, let me make this abundantly clear: You have one chance to take these two lovely ladies home. And all it’s gonna take, is bringing that pretty, doe-eyed, hot piece of ass out to Nihonbashi. And you know what, Watari? I’ll even let you drive him. Now here’s the real important part. There’ll be a photo sent to this number when I hang up. I recommend you give it a good, long look. And then remember, I like sets of twos. Keep that in mind before you get uppity and run and hide under the NPA’s kimono. You and Light, Watari, one hour. If you don’t come alone, or are followed, all the bitches die. See you soon!”

The call ended.
The brunette Omega gently took his phone back from Watari. He scrolled to the Yagami home number.

*Ring... ring... ring...*

*Damn.*

*Ring... ring... ring...*

Light closed his eyes. The repetitive sound slowly dropped him into the ironhearted, calculating mentality he’d developed a long time ago. *Ring.* He had a vague notion of a plan forming. *Ring.* The Yggdrassills weren’t the only criminals Kira hunted. *Ring.* It would be quite easy to leak information of an Yggdrassill deal to any of the Kanto sects of the Yakuza, all of whom would be more than happy to sabotage one of the pack’s investments. *Ring.* Given the right placement of information, Kira could muster an army in half an hour.

*Ring... ring... No answer.*

He opened his eyes and ended the call. His father had said Matsuda and Mogi were staying with the family. They were likely down, if not dead. His mother, too. There was nothing to be done on that front. L could dispatch an ambulance and call his father.

All that was left was to see what trap the Yggdrassills had set.

Six seconds later, the promised text arrived.

*L kept his grip on Light Yagami’s wrist, highly disconcerted at how the other was reacting. Any normal Omega would have been screaming. Or sobbing. Or numb. Not that he was ever normal, but Light Yagami had shut down completely. The usually feisty Omega was now frigid. Clinical.*

Heartless.
Not even flinching…

… at the sight of his sister strapped into a homemade bomb.

It took exactly four seconds for the room to unfreeze. “Are you coming?” Light asked, composedly, turning to Watari.

So you intend to go? What’s your plan, Kira?

Watari shot L an querying look, silently asking if he was indeed leaving with Light right now. The detective ran his free thumb across his bottom lip; he could still taste traces of Light’s blood. No. I was serious when I decided he wasn’t leaving my sight. Nowso, more than ever.

Besides, physically, Light Yagami was in no condition to even be standing. Mentally, L suspected the younger man was ready to burn Tokyo to the ground. The supposition was reinforced by the Omega huffing disdainfully at Watari’s hesitation and turning towards the elevator alone.

Of course, he could only get so far, anchored by L’s grip on his wrist.

Don’t even think about it.

“Light, you are claimed. By me. They will kill you if that is not compatible with their plan. Exchanging you is not an option.”

“Claims fade. I still match the profile.”

Hmm? I sense you’re lying. So you don’t intended to trade yourself? The Omega tugged futilely, turning his back toward the detective, and effectively hiding his face. He wrenched a little harder.
Unable to get free, Light adapted, straightening rigidly and addressing L’s successor instead, “Matt, did you get a location?”

L tried not to roll his eyes at the childish coup attempt. Technically, the Beta should be reporting that information to him. But at least the Omega hadn’t hardened himself enough to forego the habit of disrespecting his Alpha. L blinked.  

_Huh? I have an Omega… for the present, anyway… weird… Irrelevant… but weird._

Like Watari before him, Matt glanced at L before responding to Light’s question. “Yeah, unless there’s some new spoofing device out there that I don’t know about, which there isn’t, he’s within 300 meters of Nihonbashi Plaza.”

L nibbled on his thumb.  _Straightforward. Either they’re confident in their explosives, or there’s an exceptionally well-hidden, ulterior move, waiting in the wings._

“It will take forty minutes at least, to get to Nihonbashi Bridge from here. We need to leave. Now,” Light stated, turning hard eyes on the detective, “You can formulate a plan while I drive.”

_I think that’s about enough._ The Alpha released a pulse of dominating pheromones, startling the room. Light included. (Even freshly claimed, the Omega would be exponentially more sensitive to the moods of his Alpha. Not that L was under any delusion that the brunette would actually respect his authority, but the face Light made was worth it.)

_I have your attention?_”

“I have no intention of handling this exchange in good faith,” L drawled. “And neither do the Yggdrassils. The chances of Kiyomi Takada and Sayu Yagami surviving increases by 37% if Light is safely away from the scene.” He glanced at the Omega. “You are injured and cannot react optimally. Additionally, there is a 62% chance you would risk yourself unnecessarily to protect your sister, and a 98% chance she would risk herself to protect you, The Yggdrassils will have no reason to allow their hostages to live if you become captured. I could keep listing reasons why it is better for you to not be on that bridge, but we only have fifty six minutes left with which to react. And, while whatever plot you are currently devising would undoubtedly work, I have a better oner.”

L was pleased to see those caramel eyes narrowing in defiance; at least the Omega had lost the
look of a serial murderer. (In favor of a look suggesting L’s, and only L’s, murder would satisfy him.) *Give in, Light. You lack the advantage right now.*

The Alpha leaned forward, giving the rest of the room the impression he was attempting to subdue his Omega with a show of strength.

“We don’t let your pride jeopardize your sister, Kira,” L murmured.

Shock flitted across Light’s face, before the emotion was drowned with more anger.

Yes, you are definitely thinking of killing me. Still, L smirked. Kira had to know the statistics. On the off occasion the world’s greatest detective had reason to enact a rescue operation, loss of life was prevented in 95% of cases; in every other instance, a local authority had disobeyed a direct order, causing something to go terribly awry. *And right now, I consider you a local authority, Light.*

The Alpha could smell the resistance in that lithe body; Light might know he was in no condition to fight, but he was seriously considering it. Before the brunette could reply, Watari interjected. (Obviously, the gentleman had not heard the last line of the conversation.)

“Light, we have handled hostage exchanges like this in the past. The only thing they all have in common, is that they never go according to plan. We all need to be prepared, for any possibility, if we want to get Sayu and Kiyomi back alive.”

L moved even closer, again, ensuring only Light would hear. “I do promise you, Light, I will get your sister back. As I have said before, justice will prevail.”

With that, the detective released the Omega’s wrist and slouched back to his workstation, perching on his seat. He quickly tapped into Light’s phone, and displayed the most recent photo across the largest monitor. Whatever bombmaker the Yggdrassils had hired for this job was barely above average.

The Alpha grinned when he felt the telltale shift of the air.

“As there is no reason for you to have ever studied anatomy of explosives, Light, I do not expect you would have noticed the rudimentary detonator. Furthermore, as you are not part of my research and development team, you have no reason to know that we have engineered a functional
countermeasure for such devices.”

L zoomed in on the wiring around the charge, ignoring the huff of indignation on his right. *It appears to be disarmable…*

“Near?”

“The secondary detonation sequence beneath the shoulder straps may be troublesome. However, there is no timer, so given adequate cover, we should be able to disarm it.”

*We’ll need leverage... Something to stop them from simply shooting their way out with all three Omegas… An eye for an eye, perhaps?*

“Alright,” L spun back to face the room. “The Yggdrassills abducted Sayu Yagami with the objective of sowing chaos. There is a 87% chance that this is a ploy designed to force us to act irrationally. As Watari pointed out, we should not expect things to go smoothly. Gevanni, notify the NPA to mobilize, preparing to lock down the bridge and surrounding areas. Plainclothes and unmarked vehicles only within two blocks of the exchange site; ambulances and S.W.A.T. sixty seconds out or less.”

The raven shot a sideways glance to the police chief’s son. “Do not reveal the identities of the Omega hostages. As soon as it becomes clear who has been kidnapped, our resident police chief will become an unpredictable liability. Therefore, unless it becomes absolutely necessary, Soichiro Yagami should not be part of the first wave.”

L paused, curious if Light would fight him on this. But shockingly, the Omega actually seemed to approve. *You just delight in being contrary, don’t you…*

“Once they’re in position begin a search of the surrounding properties for Yggdrassill holdings or suspicious listings. Watari, do you remember that time in Morocco?”

The greying Alpha gave him a wry look. “As always, your sense of humor escapes me.”

“Oh?” *Was I making a joke? Not important.* “Too bad.” L studied the bomb a little closer.

“Near, make sure the jammer is prep-”
“No,” Light interjected, coldly. “You are not risking Sayu and Kiyomi’s lives by playing swap the Omega.”

L chewed on his thumb to hide his surprise. *You already guessed. Impressive.* Unfortunately, the brunette was becoming riled again, a chocolatey tempest brewing. *We do not have time for this and you know it.* The Alpha rose, locking eye contact. Light’s jaw clenched, and, predictably, he refused to submit. *You are impossible.*

The younger man continued, “Exchanging me leads you to the XoXo lab. I still have two trackers under my skin. You’ll just have to come find me. The victim profile only specifies unmated; there’s a good chance I’ll live, and my sister’s life will not be dependent on disarming a makeshift bomb in the middle of an unavoidable shootout with a multitude of other unknowns complicating the entire operation.” The Omega leaned forward, pushing into L’s space. “You’re risking my sister’s life on the hairbrained assumption that I am a rogue vigilante,” Light hissed, bitingly. “Nihonbashi is forty minutes away. I am leaving now!”

“No. You and Matt will stay here,” L growled. *Maybe I can put him in a straight jacket and lock the bathroom-

The scent of the old Alpha hit them all like a brick.

The raven blinked in surprise. Watari very rarely showed this level of aggression; it was akin to the times L would sneak out of the orphanage; as an unpresented Alpha, L had been quite willful and Watari had been forced to exert extreme effort to make an impression on the boy. If L hadn’t grown up with the scent, he would be attacking Watari for it right now.

Light, however, was completely unprepared for the display of dominance and a soundless whine escaped his throat. L shifted, just slightly, shielding his Omega. The show of submission, even as involuntary as it was, was infuriating. *Speak quickly, Quillish.*

“Enough,” Watari stated calmly, releasing the oppressive fog over them. He turned to address the brunette. “Light, it is clear that you have comparable levels of intelligence and motivation to several of the people on this team.” he shot a pointed glance at L “I think it would be ill-advised not to make use of those. Ryuzaki, am I mistaken in thinking that you will be taking the helicopter?”

*You know the answer to that.*
Watari nodded. “Light should accompany you. Asking him to wait here would be cruel. And a second set of eyes, especially ones as sharp as his, would not go amiss.”

The gentleman turned to the other Omega. “Near? Light is right. We should be going.” He turned his sharp grey eyes back on L. “I will trust you to evaluate the situation from the air and feed us orders and reinforcements as necessary.”

Without waiting for any more argument, Watari strode down the hall, stopping at the elevator with his hands folded behind him. Near waited until L gave him a nod before slipping into the dining room, grabbing the equipment, and joining Watari at the exit. L stood perfectly still, running his thumb across his lips, until the oldest and youngest members of his team disappeared behind the sliding doors. Be careful.

“Matt, get Aiber and Wedy moving towards Nihonbashi.”

“On it.” The Beta made a dive for his own workstation, before popping his head up one last time. “Ryuzaki, you sure you two will be alright?”

L turned back look at the Omega behind him.

Assuming he doesn't kill me… “Yes, we’ll be fine. Come on, we are heading to the roof.”

When Light didn’t immediately gripe about the order, L turned back, only to have the Omega brush by him, stalking down the hallway. Shit. They waited in silence for the elevator to return, shoulder to shoulder. But as soon as the doors closed behind them, L wrapped a hand around the back of Light's head and pulled the man’s face to the crook of his neck, where the Omega could scent his Alpha the truest.

And Light didn’t fight him.

That was just scary. Watari should have known better. Light’s metabolism had to be going haywire, and resisting yet another Alpha so soon was testing his limits. The brunette was shaky, and his skin clammy. I wonder if there’s a conversion factor for maintenance cost to hotness for these damn Omegas… Someone has to have researched the subject.
The elevator dinged, doors opening to the roof access, but L wasn’t going to move yet. Light tried to pull away, but the raven circled his other arm around the brunette’s shoulders, still holding the Omega’s head to his scent gland.

“Just breathe.”

Light’s fists balled at his side and the Alpha could almost differentiate the frequencies of the shudderings of ailment and the shakings of rage.

“You do know how inappropriate this is, don’t you? Is the concept of personal space really so difficult?” Light grated, voice muffled by fabric of L’s shirt.

Not difficult, just ridiculous. However since it was Light asking, L gave the question honest consideration. “Personal space is a cultural etiquette. I have typically found that society’s limitless etiquettes equate to vegetables. They exist, but are quite pointless. And I tend to avoid letting useless things interfere with what is necessary.” L smiled. “I am also certain Kira feels the same.”

“About etiquette or vegetables?” the Omega muttered. “Do not answer that.” He took a few rough breaths. “You should have let me go.”

If I had, there was a fifty percent chance you would have died tonight. “You are in my protective custody, Mr. Yagami; I do not intend to allow you to enter any scenario where I will be obligated to arrest you afterwards.”

Light snorted. “And what about placing yourself under arrest? Your justice doesn’t cover manhandling an unchaperoned Omega?”

“Not if it’s necessary. Despite the inconveniences of Omega biology, I do consider your health a necessity.”

Although, we are rapidly running out of time… perhaps I can speed this along. L apportioned the back part of his mind to vend the most efficient cocktail of pheromones for settling the Omega’s system. Somewhere in those uncatalogued recesses of his considerable memory, the detective ended up digging up Taylor’s Ninth Law of the Omega.

‘An Omega survives on the trust, pride, lust, and respect of his Alpha. The exception to this, as it is to all things, is love.’
Of course, Taylor had developed that law by locking bonded Omegas in scent-void chambers and dosing them with subfractions of their Alpha’s pheromones, until he saw a response. I really should have pushed for the triple life sentence… Anyway. Some combination of those four emotions would theoretically settle Light’s discomfort the swiftest. Love was inapplicable, lust would be be counterproductive, trust was certainly off the table. Kira. L grumbled. That left pride and respect. As if he needs the ego boost…

The Alpha settled for exuding a scent which he hoped conveyed 69% respect, 24% pride, 4% lust, and 2% irritation, and hoping the Omega would show improvement. He felt Light react, taking several deep breaths before pulling back. Well that was effective…

The brunette was still pale and drawn, though his expression held a mix of incredulity and insultedness. But at least his breathing had evened.

“So you’re claiming touching me is an inconvenience?”

“When it is something neither of us cognitively want, yes. Or when it delays solving this case.”

Hmm… L tilted his head. Disbelief was still the dominant emotion playing across that handsome face was undefinable, but there were smaller, more fleeting slips that indicated Light was thinking hard about that statement.

“You’re right; we should go… But, Rem is still going to murder you,” Light mused, stepping out of L’s grip and off the elevator.

The Alpha considered his memories of the white-haired Beta monstrosity. Bitch. “I’m quite certain she will try. But, I suspect the Yggdrassills will outdo her efforts.”

Zzz… zzz… zzz…

The brunette glanced down, then jerked to a halt.

“You said you’d prove you’re as good as you thought you were, right?” Light asked bitterly, turning back to the raven-haired detective. “Now’s your chance.”
He extended the phone towards the detective, balanced in his palm,

*Father calling.*

Chapter End Notes

My apologies for the delay in this post. It took some effort to try and work out the exact timing for the next five hours of plot, so much so that I have a text document with things broken down by the second... Anywho, neurotic author aside...

Touch barrier down!!! Only took 16 chapter for these two boys to have their hands all over each other... sort of...

But thank you to all of you who have been so patient with me. The next chapter will not take nearly as long, as I had to write it first, in order to get this one to make any kind of sense. Thank you!!!
A Very Narrow Bridge

Chapter Summary

In which things happen at a very quick rate, and in a very linear order. (Never mind that the author had the chapter outlined down to the second and might have twisted a couple lines over top of one another.)

Chapter Notes


For anyone who has stuck around, here is a quick recap:

Light has escaped two attempts on his person. Now his sister and friend have been kidnapped in another attempt to get at him. L has a plan, Light is reluctantly going along with it. Matt, Near, Gevanni, and Watari are in play.

(This is how my recaps look while watching Game of Thrones... so, one more time: apologies.)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

2:46 a.m.

Near squirmed uncomfortably. There really was no escaping the current predicament.

The girl’s arms constricted further, plastering herself more securely against his chest. The male Omega had made three escape attempts already, but each time he’d attempted to set foot on the ground, Light’s sister had seized in a full panic attack.

And so, here Near stayed, trapped, until Gevanni or Matt found a way to retrieve him. Or the girl succeeded in crushing his internal organs…

Whichever came first. He wasn’t going to be choosy.

At least challenging himself to braid and unbraided Sayu’s black hair, behind her head and without being able to see his hands, had proved to be quite difficult, especially once he’d started moving up to seven and eight stranded puzzles. Which meant Near was not in immediate danger of going
mad, as he clung to a modicum of mental stimulation while entrapped in this highly inconvenient stranglehold.

And, more importantly, the activity was repetitious enough to drop the white-haired detective into a deductive subspace.

Near pursed his lips. Mello would be on his way to Tokyo. It was unavoidable. Unfortunate…

The final strand of his latest attempt slipped through his fingers as Sayu began shaking again. Thoughts of the blonde Alpha dissipated, as the abrupt shivers forced Near to focus on the other Omega. This was the seventh episode Sayu had suffered in the last two hours; there would not have been a first if the fools in the ER had listened.

They hadn’t.

Even if Near didn’t know how to prevent an OSS, which he did, it would only have been life-threatening if she dropped. A trauma-induced drop was 76% lethal for Omegas, so of course the staff panicked and tried to separate the two Omegas; which was the least useful thing anyone could have done short of grabbing Aizawa’s sidearm and opening fire in the ER.

Sayu had dropped.

Near had barely been able to stabilize her in time. Now his oath as a physician required him to stay in this bed and prevent her from hyperventilating or dropping again. All of which could have been avoided if they had let him handle her treatment in the first place.

Ergo, Near was making exactly zero progress on dealing with consequences of tonight’s events.

The white-haired Omega tugged the girl deeper into his lap, releasing the plait—he would have to begin anew anyway. Sayu’s attacks were occurring, on average, every twelve minutes, lasting up to seven minutes, with an additional nine minutes of mutual deep breathing to calm her post-seizure. It was the only clock in the room.

Near pulled Sayu’s face back to the crook of his neck, where his and Light’s scents mingled the strongest. He had yet to change out of the older Omega’s clothes.
There was an uncomfortable shuffling off to the right, as Detective Aizawa stepped towards the bed, again, wanting to remove his boss’s daughter from the exceptionally scandalous position she and Near were entangled in. But, just like the last six times, Light’s sister saw it from the corner of her eye and screamed, thrashing in Near’s grasp.

Near shot the detective an icy glare. *Seriously? Did you not learn from your last six failed attempts?*

The Alpha’s face twisted uncomfortably, but raised his hands in defeat and stepped back, turning to scowl at Gevanni. The Beta was supposed to be preventing such indecent behavior as this, although, the utter absurdity of their positions being remotely inappropriately motivated was aggravating. The girl was simply clinging to the remnants of her brother’s scent.

(And, in the Beta’s defense, upon arrival at the hospital, both Gevanni and the attending had tried prying them apart. Twice. Each. Every attempt had ended the same way, with Sayu screaming bloody murder, as soon as a Beta laid hands on her and Near hissing at whichever idiot was most responsible for adding to his growing migraine.)

Of course, given that the two Omegas were key witnesses, the NPA had no choice but to keep eyes on them. After the series of events at Nihonbashi Bridge, Detective Aizawa was the only option. But, as an Alpha, stuck in a room with one very distressed and a second very pissed-off Omega, the senior inspector was struggling to stay professional. It would only become worse if Near attempted to remove himself from the situation. (Stripping out of Light’s garments, with the female cemented to his side would be a terrible idea.)

As things stood, they were stuck here, in some odd form of limbo.

Waiting.

Near growled, quietly, an imitation of L he’d decided to adopt. (If he remained first successor, the world would need to believe him an Alpha or Beta, and mimicking their behavioral quirks would be crucial.)

Sayu quivered, but Near had discovered she generally responded positively to the un-Omega-like displays from him. Perhaps a side-effect of having Light as a brother.

Regardless.
The enforced unproductiveness was completely unnecessary. He was L’s successor damnit. He could treat the girl and type at the same time, yet they wouldn’t even allow him a laptop, for fear of ‘further distressment’.

Near didn’t have to check to know that the door to the room had been locked from both sides. After the rather ugly scene in the ER, the four of them had been forcibly relocated, with the Takanawa Chief of Medicine personally slamming the door. He had then posted an obnoxious red, biohazardous ‘Quarantine’ sign, to block even the small window into the room.

Given the volume of emergency the hospital was combatting, they likely had another six hours before the staff remembered them.

It was frustrating. Honestly, no one in this room was in danger of dying.

Damn Matt.

The Beta had arrived separately, coming from the safehouse, and had thus escaped detention. He’d bypassed them in the ER, shouting he was on it and then sprinting away. Not that Near had expected him to stick around to make small talk; he was L’s third successor for a reason. There had certainly been more pressing issues at the time.

The eighteen-year old immediately halted that train of thought. Instead, he focussed on discerning differences between the son’s and daughter’s scents. Sayu had missed out on the chocolate gene, but perhaps the cherry blossoms were less overpowered this way. Near inhaled deeply, noting that, unlike Light, Sayu smelled hale and healthy, clearly taking better care of herself.

With the shaking subsiding, Near divided Sayu’s black hair into ten new strands. His fingers twisted nimbly while the vast majority of his brain was mired in the same unproductive loop, the one that could conclude Mello was coming to Japan and Matt would be coming back. Without more data, Near could get no further.

Mello was coming, Matt was coming. Over and over. It was maddening.

Trapped in a damn hospital bed, behind a locked door. Waiting for a Beta to return, and confirm who had survived.
He crossed the first strand again.

9:46 p.m.

(Exactly five hours earlier.)

Urgency and haste aside, Light eyed the detective’s mode of transportation skeptically.

“You can fly?”

“Of course.”

The world’s greatest detective smirked, passing the frozen Omega and hopping into the pilot’s seat of the same jet black helicopter that had been flying over Takanawa this morning. _Was he actually there during the riot?_ The Omega hesitantly sidled up to the aircraft and pulled himself into the passenger seat. _I wonder if I have insurance for this…_

The blades hummed to life, increasing to a full roar. The vigilante spared one final glance for the safety of the roof, before L took them up into Tokyo airspace.

They had forty-three minutes to get to the rendezvous, but if L wasn’t lying and wasn’t about to crash them into the ground, they would arrive well ahead of both Watari and the NPA. _Of course, the Yggdrassils will be there waiting. Fantastic._

Light swallowed at the disappearing safety of the concrete roof. _Damn._ Now was not the time to discover a fear of heights.

The brunette settled the headphones over his ears, tuning into the argument L was engaged in with his father. Apparently, Chief Yagami had not taken being hung-up on well, and had resorted to the NPA’s backup channels to yell at Ryuzaki. Light prudently held his tongue; Soichiro Yagami would have a heart attack if he found out his Omega son was not only _not_ secured in an L-approved black site, but, flying shotgun and unchaperoned, into a mafia-made trap.
The Chief was already raging.

L’s plan to keep his father in the dark as long as possible—one of the few parts of the detective’s plan that Light actually agreed with—had been shot to hell when Sachiko Yagami failed to answer her home phone. When Matsuda and Mogi also failed to respond, his father had panicked and dispatched patrol teams to their location.

Light had already set a mental bypass around any thoughts of the war zone he knew his childhood home must have become; his father was not so practiced at compartmentalization. An attack on his home was every cop’s worst nightmare.

The Yagami residence was now an active crime scene.

When the patrol had reported back, Chief Yagami had immediately called Light, back there on the roof, and so became read-in on the fucking mess that was this night. With his daughter kidnapped and his son named ransom, Chief Yagami was screaming for immediate action. Light flinched at the shouting that drowned out even the noise of the bird around them. The brutal commands the older Alpha snapped at L raked across the Omega’s psyche, despite not being directed at him; it was a good measurement of how badly his father was handling the situation.

_Kira could have prevented this._

“No,” L growled, fed up with being challenged by the police chief. “The NPA will not move until we have confirmation that both bombs have been disarmed.”

Light shivered. This was the first time he’d heard the detective use a full Alpha voice. _Damn._

It was enough to shut his father up.

Chief Yagami didn’t have to like it, but this was a direct order from L. (Via his left hand man, Ryuzaki—Watari being the right.) And L was… _the motherfucking L_. The NPA was fully aware who was calling the shots.

_“I don’t-” _the Chief yelled.
The detective changed frequencies.

Light eyed the Alpha next to him. *And how exactly are you planning on finding the second bomb when we’re both half a mile off the ground?* From the slips the kidnapper had made, Kira could guess the most likely targets, but without being able to actually search the sites, that bomb was as good as detonated.

“Matt, put Wedy through.”

“*Roger overlord.*”

A scratchy female voice came over the channel. Light frowned; he couldn’t tell the speaker’s Dynamic, which meant she was deliberately hiding it. *Add looking into L’s contact network to the to do list.*

“*Matt said something about a scavenger hunt for a bomb. Tell me he was joking.*”

“The device on Sayu Yagami has a short-range remote detonator. The second bomb will likely be the same. And based on his ego, the Alpha we spoke with will want control over the detonation, personally. This means that the second bomb will be within five kilometers of the Nihonbashi Bridge. It is obvious that Omegas are his preferred target, and there are two Omega apartment complexes inside that radius. The bomb will be located near the gas lines.”

“I hate you.”

“Confirm when it is disarmed,” L ordered, disconnecting.

The Omega turned to the cityscape beneath him. *You are good…*

They flew in silence, an occasional update from Matt or Watari adding to the backdrop. *Aiber?*

Light felt his anticipation surge as the Nihonbashi Bridge came into view. L flew them in a wide arc, staying high enough not to draw the attention of anyone below.
“You can touch down on the Haruki Center,” Matt advised, “Half a kilometer north by northwest. You should be able to see all the action from that position.”

“Yes, I see it,” the Alpha confirmed.

L was skilled enough that Light hadn’t felt any panic other than the initial lick upon take off. But landing… that damaged his calm. Of course, he could just still be nauseated from the claiming bites. Light would never admit it, but, based on his heart rate and lung capacity even an hour later, it was becoming alarmingly clear that without the raven-haired Alpha’s assistance, the Omega would be on a shallow deathbed right about now.

Even though his stomach bottomed out, the chopper touched down smoothly. Light moved to unbuckle himself, but a pale hand stopped him.

“Your scent indicates high levels of distress.”

“I’m fine.”

Unblinking charcoal eyes bored into him. “Your sister has been abducted. You do not need to pretend to be fine.”

Alright, you condescending chauvinistic Alpha asshat. “You assured me your plan would work,” Light hissed, “Don’t tell me you’re doubting yourself, L.”

The detective ignored the venom, but retracted his grip. Light huffed before throwing himself down to the roof. He reached back in and snatched a loose pair of binoculars off the floor of the chopper, shaking his head at the obvious lack of Watari inside the cabin. Careful L, someone might think you were a detective.

The Omega darted to the edge of the building, keeping low and out of sight, skimming along the retaining wall. If ever there was a time for a sniper… Light nearly face planted. Fuck. Someone with that particular skill drank sake with him not two days ago. Shintaro is going to be close. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.
He scanned the city around him. There were a lot of fucking windows up here.

He peeked over the wall, ignoring the vantage points in favor of the bridge. Two dark vehicles were parked on the far side. Hello, assholes. Light scanned the surrounding ground. The Yggdrassils had been smart, diverting traffic on both sides with construction warnings. If anyone tried to approach, they’d become immediately obvious.

The air shifted as L joined him at the edge. Light glanced sideways, disconnectedly wondering if L’s terrible sitting habits had been formed by crouching on rooftops. Gargoyle blood. Fitting.

The Alpha’s claim marks tingled. Likely from the close proximity of his... Oh fucking hell. Now was very much not the time for biology. Unfortunately, thirty-six hours from heat and all kinds of misclaimed and injured, even Light had to admit his control over his body was slipping. Not that L would- huh? Alpha’s fingertips curled around his forearm.

*What. The. Hell.*

*L?!

But, the Alpha wasn’t even looking at him. “I need to focus and you are distracting. Besides, physical contact ensures that you are not doing something stupid.”

Asshole. Light tried jerking away. *I do not have time to punch you.* The detective’s only response was to tug the Omega closer. *Bastard.*

“Watari?” L asked into his com, ignoring Light’s pissed off scent.

“*ETA ten minutes.*”

“Wedy?”

“*Shut up shut up shut up.*”
“I’ll conclude you found the explosive.”

Silence.

“Aiber?”

A new Alpha’s voice came through the earpiece. Light cocked an eyebrow; of course L would have more unrevealed assets in Tokyo. “In position. Area looks secure, but you didn’t give me a lot of time.”

“Matt?”

“NPA, locked and loaded. Light’s dad is throwing a whopper of a hissy fit—must have been rough growing up—but I have Detective Mogi locking him down. They’re prepped and ready to move in as soon as we have eyes on the girls. Near, you’ll have forty second window.”

“Noted.”

“Wedy?” L asked again.

“Shut up shut up shut up.”

“Wedy…”

“Shut up shut up shut UP!”

“Wedy…”

“Yes, I found it. Now shut up.”

“Can you disarm it?”
“Shut up. Give me a fucking minute. Or two, if you don’t SHUT THE FUCK UP!”

“Watari?”

“Two minutes.”

“Wedy, we need that bomb out of play. Now.”

“Shut up L!”

Light scanned the area leading up to the bridge. Watari and Near would come into view from the north any second. This Wedy person had better get her ass in gear. He turned the binoculars on the driver-side door of the lead car. There’s the Alpha. Kiyomi and Sayu are likely in the back…

“That’s one,” he breathed just for L, “What about the one on Sayu?”

“The jammer works most effectively from a range of fifty meters. Near will be able to prevent it from detonating until he can neutralize it to an extent where it can be removed from her person. At that point, the NPA will be on site. Their bomb unit has been briefed on the situation.”

“How sure about this are you?”

The detective leveled the side of Light’s face with a sardonic blank stare. Light lowered the binoculars and met the dark eyes. You’d better be sure. L’s dark gaze didn’t waver, and Light was suddenly recalling every case of L’s he’d ever studied. He could see the bandits in Beirut and the terrorists in Guatemala in those black eyes. Even Kira had to acknowledge the experience there; he didn’t have to like it though.

Wedy’s voice interrupted. “Got it! And boss? I want a fucking raise.”

“Good work, Wedy,” L said, still locking gazes with the Omega. “We have four minutes before the hour runs out. Watari?”
“ETA thirty seconds.”

“Near?”

“I am ready.”

The detective blinked and suddenly Light was back on the Tokyo roof. They both turned to the bridge, raising binoculars. L’s fingers dug a little deeper into the Omega’s wrist.

“And you Light? Are you ready?”

Light glowered.

“Don’t make me regret this.”

10:17 p.m.

“Got it!”

Near flinched at Wedy’s shout through the coms. Watari nodded and took the final turn en route to the bridge.

“Watari?” L called again.

“ETA four minutes.” The old Alpha flicked a glance over to Near’s side of the car. “Are you sure you want to do this?”

“Near?”
“I am ready.”

Near rolled his eyes. Both Alphas were displeased at the risk they were putting to the young Omega. Looking down the road to the impending showdown, Near would really rather no one second guessed him right now. *Light may actually have the right idea with his apartment of solitude.* However, the older Omega’s tendency to bristle at every minor slight, though amusing to Near — enough to make a tally of the number of times a day he himself would have to snap, if he had Light’s attitude — must be exhausting.

Not that it mattered now, as Nihonbashi Bridge came into sharp relief.

Near glowered at the two black SUVs waiting for them in blockade on the south side. As instructed, Watari had approached from the north, putting them directly under the overpass, out of view of most surveillance. *Matt would have accessed the available feeds in the area; hopefully he’ll have something useable.*

The Omega flicked a glance up, to where he could sense dark eyes watching them from above. Right on cue, L’s voice came over the channel. *“Watari, get as close as you can.”*

Watari brought their SUV to a slow halt in the center of the bridge. The black doors across the way swung open, unleashing a cohort of muscular Betas. And one Alpha. *Seven targets.*

Near’s grey eyes narrowed. The greatest danger was that the enemy would fire at Watari on sight, with the goal of acquiring unhindered access to all three Omegas. It was essential that ‘Light’ stay out of sight, until Watari convinced them that option was not in their best interest.

The first successor’s gaze darted down to the mirror braced against the dash. *Light would not have left bed looking like this…* Aiber had met them en route, for a split second supply drop. It was the first time Near approved of L’s choice to not throw the former conman in jail. The brown-haired wig he’d provided was scratchy, but quality. The younger Omega’s natural fluffy white tresses were sufficiently buried in a poor mimic of Light Yagami’s perfect style.

Between the irksome wig and Light’s own clothes, Near should be able to pass for the older Omega at the range Watari had brought them to, for the sixty seconds it would take for the NPA to reach them.
Near rubbed a few synthetic brown strands between his fingers. *Sayu Yagami and Kiyomi Takada will be wildcards.* It was impossible to predict when the hostages would notice he was not the real Light Yagami.

> "The NPA will move as soon as you have a visual on Yagami and Takada... Be careful, Watari."

Near doubted anyone else could hear the concern in his boss’s tone, but Near could sense the Alpha was not happy. *Hopefully Light’s presence keeps him calm.*

“This is it,” Watari muttered.

The old man stepped out of the vehicle, shielding his body behind the bulletproof door. All six Betas drew their weapons.

*Predictable.*

The Alpha sauntered forward and leaned against the hood of his SUV, frowning.

> “Where’s our boy, Watari?” he yelled across the gap, “We had a deal.”

Near twirled the wig’s hair; it was definitely the same Alpha from the ransom call; the man’s perverted tone belonged in a straight jacket. (The Yggdrassills would not have received Light unassaulted from this Alpha, no matter the bounty.)

“I need visual confirmation that Sayu Yagami and Kiyomi Takada are unharmed,” Watari called back.

“You sure about that? We could just shoot you and take all three!” one of the Betas in the back shouted.

*Idiot.*

The Alpha shot his man a death glare.
“I’m quite sure. I have already taken your lack of honor into account,” Watari responded, coolly. “Though I will thank you for the idea. You see, I brought my own bomb.”

Watari’s hand poked around the door, displaying the trigger.

“I shall assume you understand what a deadman’s switch is?”

Near’s fingers curled over Aiber’s five-minute handiwork. It was a calculated risk. The Omega was still annoyed that Watari had refused to let him make it live. L had instructed they use a fake charge, so, on the side of the road, Near had held perfectly still, allowing the blonde Alpha to wrap him in what could only be described as the shoddiest piece of ordnance ever made by man. After half a decade working with him, the white-haired detective wasn’t even surprised that Aiber carried C4 in his trunk.

As far as Near was concerned, the only reason not to have a working explosive would be to prevent him from sacrificing himself to let the hostages escape.

The wires crunched in Near’s twisted grip.

Watari took a step forward, when the kidnappers failed to shoot. The Betas had all hesitated, waiting for the Alpha’s instructions.

“Your employers want Light Yagami alive, correct?” the old Alpha continued, “Unless you have a death wish, I trust this ensures we can deal in good faith, yes?”

Near held his breath. **Moment of truth.**

All eyes were on the leader. The Alpha considered Watari critically for a few moments, until he finally waved a lazy hand.

His people lowered their guns. Near’s fingers released the plastics.

*Checkpoint one.*
“Well, Watari,” the leader laughed, “You don’t disappoint. So, in the interest of things not going boom (‘things’ being exceptionally hot pieces of ass) you show us yours, we’ll show you ours.”

“Sayu and Kiyomi first,” Watari demanded.

The man snarled, going cold to hot in a split second. “You’re quite pushy, my friend,” he spat, “I suggest you don’t push your luck.” And then he smiled. “But don’t worry, I gotcha. Good faith and all, right? Bring the bitches out, boys.”

One of the Betas in the back yanked open the rear door and reached in. He pulled back, dragging two hooded figures into view. The hostages were clearly Omegas and matched Yagami and Takada’s description, but L would want facial recognition before letting the NPA loose.

The Omegas stumbled forward blindly, clutching at each other in obvious distress.

_Not good._

Watari paled. Near tensed at the Alpha’s uncharacteristic display of discomfort. Abused Omegas were an unknown quantity in this mission; all Near could do was hope Watari didn’t give in to the Alpha instincts demanding he protect them. Immediately. Near ground his teeth. L was probably just as bad off…

“I need visual confirmation that these are the Omegas promised,” Watari stated, not disguising his anger at all. The old man’s free hand curled into a jagged fist, twitching towards his sidearm. It was an impressive show of control. Most any other Alpha would have already leapt across the bridge in a suicidal attempt to save the girls.

“They’re Omegas!” the Alpha laughed, “Ain’t that good enough?”.

Near frowned. The fact that an Alpha could be as nonchalant as this guy seemed to be, with two Omegas in acute distress not three meters from him, suggested the man was truly sick.

When Watari made no comment, the Alpha sighed dramatically and stomped over, yanking the hoods off. Both Sayu and Kiyomi cringed away from the leering Alpha. He fondled their faces,
before grabbing them by the scruff of their necks and shaking them at Watari.

“*Matt, send in the NPA now. Quietly.*” Near flinched at the raven-haired detective’s voice. It was buried deep in the audio, but L was furious.

“Satisfied?” the unsub chirped, “Now show us our goods.”

*Forty seconds…*

He needed to get as close enough to Sayu, before the NPA arrived and that Alpha tried to kill them all.

“Light?” Watari called back to the SUV.

Near unbuckled the seatbelt. Show time.

Unfortunately, Watari’s voice carried across the bridge, and the sister started screaming.

“No! Light, no! Get out of here!”

Near grimaced, pushing open the door. Her visceral response was completely unnecessary, and likely to get them all killed. From a strategic standpoint, it was a relief when one of the Betas slapped her across the face, knocking her into Takada.

That didn’t stop Near from wanting to strangle him.

Or the snarls from Watari and L.

The older female clung to the younger girl, both sobbing.

‘Light’ appeared around the vehicle, coming level with Watari.
Report from the jammer looks good. Near?” Matt whispered

Near thumbed the jamming device in Light’s coat, feeling it vibrate in response. He murmured, “Functional. ”

He shuffled a few hesitant steps sideways. They would expect Light to be scared; it’s what that Alpha would want. Near focused on giving off a faint mix of terror and resolution, letting his own scent meld with the lingering essence of Light on the clothing.

Watari gave a small nod of approval.

Near ignored it and focussed on Sayu, like Light would.

She hadn’t reacted yet, still crying in Kiyomi’s arms. The vest she was wearing had to be heavy, because the little Omega was struggling to stay upright, even with Takada’s support. Either that, or they’d done something to her.

Near dearly hoped she would be able to run.

The Alpha hooted at the sight of the male Omega. “Well, well, well! Light. Yagami. I hate to admit it, but I was doubtful. So very doubtful. But! Here. You. Are.”

It seemed he passed the cursive scrutinization the Yggdrassill’s men gave him. Of course, in the deeper recesses of his mind, Near balked at being mistaken as Light Yagami. That Omega had issues. But why would these criminals think otherwise? What other Omega would possibly volunteer for kidnap and torture?

Near huffed silently.

“Alrighty! Let’s make this nice and simple. You try anything, we blow the bitches sky high. And then for our trouble, you find out where we hid our insurance policy. Got it?”

Watari nodded under the fedora. “Understood.”
“Thirty two seconds,” Matt murmured.

The Beta gave the girls a rough shove. Sayu and Kiyomi began stumbling towards Watari’s SUV, becoming increasingly hysterical with each step.

Near started forward, taking measured paces across the bridge.

“Be safe, Near.”

His fingers clenched. This was neither the time nor the place to pretend safety existed. Not with two bombs and a dozen semi-automatics. There was no being safe here.

Near estimated a little over fifty-two meters between the vehicles. The jammer would reach peak effectivity once he crossed the quarter way mark. Ideally, he would be level with exchanging Omegas as the NPA arrived.

‘Light’ turned his attention to the girls. He could see the fresh and blatant confusion plastering itself across Sayu Yagami’s face. She knows. She hadn’t panicked though. Near exhaled. The girl probably thought her father had orchestrated this. Good.

His gaze turned on the other hostage.

Takada.

Near caught the instant she realized he was not the real Light Yagami. Her lips parted and he felt her quiet gasp, as she stumbled. He ground his teeth. Do not panic.

“Twenty four seconds…”

Sayu also seemed to notice Kiyomi’s hesitation. She leaned heavily into the older Omega, whispering. Near swallowed a hiss of irritation. Do not let them see. At least they kept it brief.
Near increased his pace marginally, nerves catching fire.

In the disconnected part of his brain, the young Omega analyzed his response to the unfamiliar sense of fear. Apparently, his default was aggravation.

The train rushing overhead. The Betas chomping at the bit, dying to get their hands on him. The jammer weighing in his pocket. Kiyomi Takada vibrating and stumbling some more. L and Matt watching from afar.

All of it was irritating.

Somewhere around the twenty-two meter mark, Near concluded that he thoroughly hated Light Yagami. Of all the nuisances here on the bridge, those amber eyes tracking him vexed him the deepest. A slight drag of his boot along the smooth stones caused Near to realize just how distracting transmuting his adrenaline rush into annoyance was becoming.

The seventeen year-old forced himself to sink into a detached calm.

“Eighteen seconds.”

The three Omegas were about twenty-five meters apart; Near’s hand brushed against the device buried in his pocket. It was giving a new pattern of vibrations. *Fully functional.* The detective had no reason to distrust the data, but the epinephrine in his system had an interesting ability to defy rationality. That too, was most irksome. Dark shadows of doubt steadily ate away at his confidence —

“COPS!!!”

Time froze.

And then it unfroze.

Near sprinted forward.
“You just got a lot of Omegas killed Watari!” the Alpha snarled, brandishing the phone in his hand.

Sayu and Kiyomi turned, paralyzed, gaping in horror at the switch. The man’s thumb jerked downward and the girls screamed.

Near felt the jammer pulse mid-stride, indicating it had done its work. The Omega felt a whine of relief rip from his throat. Absently, he knew he was experiencing an unreasonable amount of terror, to have made such an instinctual sound, but his feet moved by rote.

It was critical that the device on Sayu be removed. The jammer bought time, but it wouldn’t hold out forever. Nevermind the R&D team’s calculations. He was only had a couple of meters left.

“Shoot them!” someone screeched.

The male Omega’s body collided with the frozen females. Near’s force, combined with the threat, drove the three of them to the pavement.

Shots rang out from both directions.

L was shouting something in his ear, but all Near could focus on was the feel of live wiring beneath his fingers. He’d landed directly atop the youngest Yagami, and all he could see, scent, and feel was her terror. And the bomb between them.

He met Sayu’s horrified eyes.

Bomb or no, they needed cover.

There was a thud of a body dropping to his right; Near caught the motion from his periphery. One of the Betas had underestimated the ex-Queensman’s aim. Watari could only buy them so much protection though. The sirens were too far away still.

“Come on!”
Near hooked his arms under Sayu’s and started dragging her towards the edge of the bridge, trying to stay low. Anything to get out of the main line of flying projectiles. Sayu struggled to get her feet under herself, but there was no time. Takada wasn’t helping matters, crawling alongside and clinging to Light’s jacket.

A fresh hail of bullets drove them to the ground again, pebbles digging into his face.

“NEAR! MOVE!” Matt screamed.

The Omega squinted over Sayu’s shoulder to see three of the Betas advancing on them. Sirens decorated the backdrop, but the subs didn’t seem to care. The Alpha and remaining Betas had taken cover behind their vehicles, focusing most of their shots at Watari, letting their colleagues rush the Omegas.

Watari was putting up a solid fight though. One of the Betas dropped, taking a bullet to the thigh. The others snarled, being forced backwards.

Near’s head whipped back down to Sayu, heart stopping. The vibrations against his hip had changed.

The jammer was failing.

Near groped with the wiring of the bomb. He’d studied the bomb from the photo. He knew how to disarm it. Of course, that required him to actually be able to look at it, and as it was, he was trapped on the ground avoiding being impaled by tiny projectiles.

“Matt, the jammer is dying,” Near said, “Estimate less than sixty seconds to total failure.”

Sayu’s eyes shot wide. The meaning was clear and her fear hit hard, nearly forcing a seizure on the detective.

“Can you disarm it?” It wasn’t Matt’s voice, but Light’s.

“Not if I’m shot.”
“Watari, give Near—WATARI!”

It happened in slow motion for Near. One second he was staring at the tears forming in the corners of Sayu’s eyes, and the next his gaze was filled with Watari’s body slowly falling and meeting the pavement, black fedora tumbling off.

No.

Near’s brain refused to process.

No.

Sayu’s fingers clawed at him, trying to regain his attention, but he could only stare at the unmoving body on the ground surrounded by the glow of arriving lights.

No.

It wasn’t until Watari’s scent, the scent of blood, hit him, that Near internalized the phenomenon.

Watari had been shot. But the bomb was still live, and the jammer was still failing. The Omega rose to his knees, no longer caring about the bullets above him. His fingers found the small knife and pliers buried in his pocket. Three wires, two primary charges…

“Near, you don’t have time.”

He ignored the Beta, carefully unsheathing the wire. There wasn’t time to completely disarm it. There never had been.

“Near! Get out of there!”

No.
He couldn’t disarm it, but he could get it off of the girl. She was shaking beneath the harness, still lying on the cold stone. Takada had somehow made it to the bridge edge and was watching with horrified eyes. Near ignored her.

“As soon as it’s off, we must run,” Near snapped, never taking his eyes off the copper wiring. The vibrations from his pocket had completely stopped.

She gave a shaky nod, pushing her arms under her.

“Get the fucking Omegas!”

“Near!”

Almost. He just had to get the over arm piece loose and she could slip free. Movement on his right alerted Near to the Betas advancing again. Almost.

Got it!

“Slide out! Now!”

“Get out of there!”

The female Omega wriggled, whines bubbling from her throat as her clothes caught on the rough edges.

“Come on!”

The device slipped free, and Sayu scrambled upright. Near twisted, hurling the free bomb towards the unsub. It was an awkward throw, and the explosive was still far too close for comfort.

“Move!” he screamed.
He lurched to his feet, grabbing Sayu’s wrist and barreled towards their SUV.

They got all of three steps before the inevitable happened.

Boom.

The light hit first. Then Near was lifted off his feet and slammed forward. The world tilted and he registered his body meeting the pavement. His chest hit hard. Then his head.

And all went dark.

_________________________________________________
“Somebody talk to me!” Matt screamed.

10:47 p.m.

The bridge was a mess. L assumed the swarming police would make room for the helicopter, as he carefully selected a landing site on the north end. The south end and the bridge itself were overrun with emergency vehicles and the S.W.A.T. blockade.

From above, L could see an EMT loading Watari onto a stretcher. The Omega next to him inhaled sharply, scenting the wrath in the air, and squeezed L’s forearm. It appeared Light was sensitive to even the most minute changes in L’s scent now that he had been claimed. In the moment Watari had been hit, L hadn’t even had time to react before Light’s arms had constricted around his waist, hand silencing the detective’s growls. Light’s actions had hardly been necessary. They had been too far from the scene to be heard. And L had been in control.

Although, ‘in control’ alone versus ‘in control’ in the presence of a claimed Omega seemed to have two different definitions. L couldn’t fault Light for trying to appease his Alpha when said Alpha was frozen with rage.

“Matt, what’s Watari’s condition?”

“Two gunshot wounds. One to the calf, not serious. One to the-”

“I’m fine, L. Focus on getting Light down here; his sister needs him.”
They were nearing the ground, where bodies began to block the view, but the three Omegas stood out. They were huddled around the back of the second ambulance, presumably being pressed with calming draughts from another EMT. Sayu Yagami sobbed uncontrollably, clinging to Near, who looked more uncomfortable than L had ever seen. Kiyomi Takada was similarly inconsolable, her shivering visible even from this distance.

Near had been unable to report since the explosion, with his com being knocked out in the explosion. Visually, he seemed more collected than either of the females, but L would be ordering a psych eval for the successor immediately.

*I suppose we can say the prototype works.*

Aiber had disappeared. L had caught a glimpse of the blonde hair, after the Alpha broken up a fight between first responders over the three unchaperoned Omegas, but the conman was probably long gone by now. Given that he had been forced to physically manhandle the three victims back onto solid ground—and had a record as long as any Yggdrassill—it was best the Alpha got lost in the night.

The chopper felt shaky coming down and it took a moment for L to figure out that it was Light’s chocolatey distress causing the instability. Inside the helicopter, neither of them could hide from the other’s pheromones and the tiniest surges caused dangerous feedback loops. A couple of extra bodies had to dodge the landing site. In hindsight, L decided he really should have known better than to enter a confined space with this particular Omega.

He forced himself to focus on the getting them grounded safely.

Their view was suddenly full of seven kidnappers lined up on the ground in front of the would-be getaway vehicle, a dozen or so sidearms leveled in their direction.

Detectives and bomb squad personnel were sweeping the area for any more surprises, but L was ninety-seven percent certain there had only ever been the two bombs. *And Wedy should be long gone by now.*

The instant the chopper touched the pavement, the hand on L’s arm disappeared, as his passenger nimbly unbuckled and dashed out into the crowd.
Damn. So it was true that Alphas disliked seeing their Omegas flee from them.

L prepared to follow as Ryuzaki, just as the com in his ear woke up.

“L,” Matt said, “I got IDs on the kidnappers. I also sent you the report on Takada. It looks like they’ve been watching her for a while.”

A quick glance at the scene showed Light safely inside the circle of NPA officers, escorted by his father, so the Alpha took a moment to skim through Matt’s reports. Anything that could help with the interrogation strategy; the Alpha unsub was psychotic, but they might be able to break one of the Betas.

He quickly scrolled through the Takada file, wanting to move on to the kidnappers. Except… Takada’s mating interview history. Black eyes widened.

Light had been right. The female Omega had met with Shintaro the same night Light had. Only, that wasn’t their first interview together.

The detective’s head snapped over to where the four Omegas were gathered.

No…!

L heard the chink of the glass, right before he felt the bullet pierce his chest.

10:56 p.m.

She’s alright.

Sayu spotted her brother running up to her, and immediately transferred her clinging from the pale Omega to him. Kiyomi, likewise wrapped her arms around Light’s shoulders, sobbing into his white shirt. Even Near gravitated toward the cluster of comfort, shoulder pressed tightly against Sayu’s, requiring physical reassurance after the adrenaline rush. Light’s hand found Near’s wrist and rubbed the same circles into the scent gland as he had on L’s wrist.
You’re still a brat.

“Light! Sayu!”

The brunette twisted and saw the NPA Chief converging on them. Soichiro Yagami was clearly in Alpha mode, scent warning everyone in a five meter vicinity to back the hell away from his children. He wrapped his arms tightly around them both. His father held them for only a few seconds, before pulling back to visually confirm their well being.

Light took the moment to check Sayu over and was relieved that, other than being all kinds of shook up, his sister was in remarkably good condition. The brunette winced when he felt his father’s focus move to him.

Hi, dad.

The Chief’s eyes bulged at the bandages covering the entirety of his son’s neck, obviously hiding claiming marks. A quick sniff at Light confirmed his suspicions. The Omega flushed but held his composure. *Yeah, yeah, yeah. Claimed by the world’s greatest detective. Shocked the hell out of me too.*

Speaking of which…

The brunette glanced back to the helicopter that had brought him here. Obviously ‘L’ couldn’t be here in person. *But Ryuzaki would want to question-*

Light froze.

The helicopter’s windshield was tinted, so he couldn’t see the raven-haired Alpha inside, but he could see a network of white spider veins decorating the glass. All stemming from a small hole in the center.

No…

There was no way that was possible. No…
No.

No!

The brunette started towards the helicopter, but Watari’s scream stopped him.

“NEAR! Get down!”

Light barely had time to turn back and spot the red laser sight settling above Near’s heart, before his sister’s body took its place.

No!!!

Sayu had reacted before any of them. Faster than Light would have ever expected. She launched herself at the white-haired Omega, knocking him aside.

And the bullet meant for L’s successor, drew Yagami blood instead.

Both Omegas crashed to the ground.

“Sa-!”

His father’s yell was cut off as a second shot rang out, hitting the NPA Chief squarely in the chest.

“SHOOTER!”

The entire bridge ducked for cover, as more shots peppered the scene. Self-preservation drove Light to the pavement, brain still stalled out, cycling through the only three truths he could process.
L’s been shot.

Sayu’s been shot.

Dad’s been shot.

And they were still taking fire.

The adrenaline kicked in, unleashing Kira. Why didn’t we hear the first two shots?

Two shooters. One silenced, one not.

But they hadn’t aimed at him, so likely they wouldn’t, even if he moved into sight. Light craned his neck. Sayu and his father were both bleeding, but from this angle, he couldn’t assess how badly. Neither were moving.

He raised himself to his forearms, bandages catching on the stone.

Fuck.

Near was pinned under his sister, but the Omega had his hands wrapped around her wound, trying to slow the bleeding. His father was unconscious.

Have to do something… Light growled, as he tried to crawl forward. More shots rained down. His ribs took this opportunity to remind him that they were broken, burning like a brand.

The brunette managed to struggle onto his knees, when he felt a prick on the back of his neck. Shit. It didn’t feel like a graze.

Light whipped his head around to see… Kiyomi?
The final pieces clicked into place. *Fuck, fuck fucking fuck!*

A new hail of shots hit the armored vehicles, forcing the NPA to duck again.

“Don’t worry, Light, I’ve got you,” Kiyomi whispered, wrapping her arms around him, one hand covering his mouth. It was the same hold he’d put L in less than twenty minutes ago. *Let go of me you bitch!*

Watari shouted from inside the ambulance, trying to get the NPA to notice what was happening, but… *shit!* One of the EMTs leveled a side arm at the old Alpha’s chest.

And pulled the trigger.

*NO!*

Light struggled. He had to break free.

But the sedative hit his motor system, and his limbs gave out. He slumped into Kiyomi’s grasp, head lolling against her slender neck. *You’re dead, Kiyomi. I will kill you for this.*

The false EMT and the bitch dragged him backwards, behind the ambulance, until the only thing left to see was the top of his father’s head, still on the ground.

Light felt hands in his pockets. *Don’t… fucking… touch… me…* His cell phone clattered to the ground, followed by the com in his ear. Only with it gone did he realize Matt had been yelling, unheard, for the last sixty seconds.

No one was coming to help. To the NPA, it looked like the Omegas were just hiding from the shooter.

*Damn…*

*it…*
The bastards shoved Light up against stone railing of the bridge, holding him like a ragdoll, The bitch wrapped herself around him, pressing their cheeks together.

“I’ve got you. I’ve got you.”

_Burn… in… hell…_

With his muscles lax, the drug moved on to shutting down the remainder of the brunette’s cognition. One second they were leaning against the stone. The next…

Light barely processed tumbling over the edge or the weightlessness of the fall. Not even the shock of cold, black water registered, before everything went truly dark.

Chapter End Notes

There are no excuses for this late hour of posting.

I made a very grave mistake of answering a questionnaire at the doctor's office honestly, and next thing I know I have been diagnosed with both anxiety and depression. If ever there was a recipe for instant writers block, that would be it. That and rumors of trolls and other awful creatures looking in the bowels of this site.

Thank you to everyone here who has been so supportive; I am so happy that I have not encountered such things with any of my stories so far. Of course, that just makes me want to give you even better chapters, and make up for all the wait.

I do sincerely apologize for the delay. I am not abandoning this story or this fandom and I truly hope to get back to a more regular update schedule. I hope you enjoy, and if you have comments I shall be better at responding to them. (I am going to go back and reply to every single comment that I have gotten in the past four months. (I have read and loved them all!)}
The First Forty-eight

Chapter Summary

In which the aftermath of the disaster is evaluated, and the formings of a plan take shape.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Beep… Beep… Beep…

How repetitive… annoyingly repetitive…

L slowly resurfaced into the waking world. His body was stiff, retaining the lingering ache of having been still too long. The Alpha lay flat on his back, a position highly unnatural to a sleepless sloucher, muscles sluggish and heavy, eyelids uncooperative. The detective swallowed thickly, trying to alleviate the dryness in his throat. As an insomniac who didn’t bother to remember the last time he’d been unconscious for longer than half an hour, the detective felt…numb.

Something very bad happened.

L tried to focus.

It was important. He needed to shake off the grogginess; he needed to remember.

Only blankness was forthcoming.

Failing to overcome the steep walls around his memory, the Alpha inhaled deeply, trying to suss out who and what surrounded him. He hoped for one particular scent, but it was acutely absent. Watari should know better… Without it, the extraordinary effort of waking hardly seemed worth it.

What he did scent, suggested a scenario far less auspicious.
In a hospital... the beeping... and amorphous dread fogging his mind. Doped... recently.

The detective cracked his eyes open, wincing as sleep tugged his lashes and steeling himself for obnoxious white fluorescents, but the room was dark. No light...

The shadows in his peripheral shifted, as his third successor straightened in the chair, noticing that L was awake. Awake, but hardly coherent. The Alpha breathed evenly, reciting primes, trying to force his mind to revive. When he reached five hundred forty-one, L concluded he was cogent enough to take further stock of the room.

Private. No chart. Door locked. Likely fifth or sixth floor.

Other than being shot, not bad—shot.

I was shot.

The ache beneath the drugs supported the conclusion. Murky recollections bubbled over the barrier in the detective’s mind, but trying to focus on any particular image resulted in its immediate dissolution from his brain.

Fortunately, time did not seem pressing, or the Beta would not be sitting so patiently.

L backtracked to the fact that he was in a hospital, a public space. Unusual, but, assuming the number of witnesses was manageable, Matt had done well.

The redhead seemed to be waiting for L to open a dialog, but the detective would need a fully matured thought first. The Alpha found a point on the far wall to focus on, quelling the nausea that came with the disorientation of waking in a place he most certainly had not fallen asleep in. At least the redhead was smart enough not to waste time with pointless questions, such as ‘how are you feeling?’
As his focus began to string together longer and longer series of recollections, L’s gaze drifted upwards. It had happened in the helicopter. At the bridge. *He was next to me. Then… he left. There had been… someone had…*

L exhaled frustratedly.

The rest was still just flashes of color. And the alabaster ceiling offered no answers. The Alpha’s sights fell to the right, towards the only source of light in the space. Soft white beams of the moon diffused quietly through the window, illuminating the otherwise dark recovery room.

“Where is he?” L breathed, voice scratching from disuse.

*Light… He had exited the helicopter. Had met his family on the bridge. But what had the Omega done next? The bleeding, and subsequent trying to avoid dying, had interrupted L’s line on the Omega. Sometime between then and losing conscious entirely, Light had disappeared. Everyone had disappeared. L had slumped over the controls, listening as first Watari, then Light, and finally Matt went dark.*

Speaking of whom… *I asked him a question.* Only grievous silence answered it.

“Where is he?” L demanded.

Matt inhaled sharply. A small hesitation, and then finally the Beta whispered softly, “He's gone.”

He didn't need to ask who L meant.

“The trackers?” L tried, unwilling to turn around and see the obvious answer etched across Matt’s face.

“Offline,” Matt said, “We found them in a warehouse off the south end of the bay. It--it looks like they were…cut out.”
L’s snarl sounded weak, even to his own ears. *Light*… The detective’s jaw clenched. There had been two-dozen armed officers on that bridge. *Light should be here right now.*

“Explain.”

Fabric rustled uncertainly. L growled again, vocal chords returning to full strength.

“We failed to account for the possibility that the Yggdrassills would declare war on the NPA,” the Beta stated bluntly.

L closed his eyes and nodded to himself. *Zero point two percent*… That’s how likely it had been: an all out attack on the S.W.A.T. team. The possibility had been acknowledged; Light himself had dismissed it. The Omega had even used its improbability to try to convince L to let him catch up to Watari. L had refused. The sight of Light storming towards the elevator flashed across L’s memory; he had at least stopped the brunette there. It didn’t change the fact that Matt was sitting next to him and Light wasn’t.

*Fail?…yes…I suppose that we did…*

This outcome had been unlikely for many reasons; organizations like the Yggdrassills only survived because they skulked in the shadows. Gunfire, like that on the bridge, was memorable. Even after L had been shot, the shooting had registered; *I had been counting the rounds*… he remembered, while bleeding out in the helicopter. *Forty-seven.* The Yggdrassills got away with their innumerable crimes because, in ninety-nine percent of cases, no one ever knew a crime had been committed--or could even be sure something had happened.

Public spectacles drew the eyes of more than just police. And Japan was perhaps the worst possible place for mob packs to surface.

The Alpha frowned. *The reporters will come first. Then the politicians.* And then, if they were very, very unlucky, the radical activists would surface. The order of events was well defined, and L’s team was usually equipped to deal with the fallout. Unfortunately, the rare times when the story broke before the criminals were behind bars were the bloodiest.

*The prime minister will call soon…*
Japan had been one of the last to sign the UN’s Omega Equality Treaty; the Alpha-favored nuances of Dynamic interactions had steeped too deeply into the culture to allow such radical changes so quickly. It hadn’t been until a final desperate act by the Rights Movement that the Diet had conceded. Geologists had known Sakura-jima was due to erupt, and yet five-hundred, seventy-three Japanese Omegas had sat in the crater and threatened to remain there, until the government joined the international reformation. No one had taken them seriously.

Until the lava had burnt them alive.

The Tragedy of Sakura-jima shocked even the ragged remains of a revolution-ravaged world. And gave birth to groups like the Sons of the Forsaken and Lost Lotus (as dubbed by entrepreneuring Hollywood writers). Those extremists had taken the Omegas’ movement to the streets, violently forcing the already conceding Prime Minister’s hand. The groups had largely dispersed in recent times, unable to gain traction as Omega-hate crimes became harder and harder to detect. Light Yagami’s kidnapping could change that.

*Luck has never been one of our strong suits…*

The investigation needed to change tactics. So much noise would muddle the evidence and destroy any chance of recovering Light Yagami alive.

Of course, the Yggdrassills would suffer most for the decision. As soon as their sniper had fired on the N.P.A., they had made targets of themselves. From today onward, their operations would no longer be ignored; their legmen would no longer find leniency; heads would no longer turn from ‘suggestions’ of lethal force. *They will be feeling the ramifications of this decision for decades.*

*They would only make this move if absolutely necessary.*

The detective fisted the sheet.

*Light Yagami was absolutely necessary.*

That was the crux. There was no other reason to put this much effort into kidnapping him.

The XoXo trials should have taken any eligible candidate. To focus on one particular Omega?

There were only two possibilities. Both equally convoluted, that could only result from orthogonal
agendas within the family.

L hadn’t lent them credence before now, since the Tokyo branch of Yggdrassills had shown no such schism since Shishio rose to power. *Even with the arrest, there should not be this much disobedience from his subordinates.* The detective shifted on the scratchy cot, weighing the odds.

*One:* The XoXo trials had been designed with Ryuk Yggdrassill’s former mate in mind.

L bit his lip. *It was possible.* But for that to happen, they would have had to connect the Omega that disappeared six years ago with the Light Yagami living in Tokyo today. And those tracks had been difficult for even Matt to trace.

*But if they had…*

It was thin. The XoXo trial was a multimillion Euro operation. If the pack at large had discovered the Omega still existed in Tokyo, they would have just taken him off the street. To go through this kind of trouble, a particular bloc would have to *not* want Ryuk Yggdrassill’s mate back in play. If that sect was the controlling group, then the minor group could have conceived the drug operation as a profitable enterprise, planning to use it as a cover to get to Light.

Assuming all that was true, now that they had Light, for packs there was no such thing as divorce. Light would be treated as a defector needing to be healed with drugs and training. The goal would be to use the Omega to bring Ryuk Yggdrassill back to Tokyo and back into power. And, as a serendipitous fuck-you to Light Yagami, if XoXo could actually bond an Omega like Near hypothesized, then Light would have no choice but to recant his accusations from six years ago and continue as Ryuk’s mate. Or be sentenced to death by the Japanese judicial system.

*Which means either Ryuk himself, or a staunch supporter with enough intelligence and authority, is responsible for Light’s abduction.*

L frowned. The Yggdrassill scion had evaded capture for nearly six years; he might have the subtlety to pull this off, despite never having exercised caution in his earlier crimes.

*Thin… very thin… seventeen percent thin.*

*Two:* The XoXo trials had nothing to do with Light Yagami, but someone was using them as a
distraction to get to that particular Omega.

Also thin. But…

Two point one: The converse of the first option. The XoXo trials were always in the works, but one of the Alphas, near the top of the organization, had seen the arrest of Shishio Yggdrassill, compounded with the exile of Ryuk Yggdrassill, and decided to seize power.

In this case, Light Yagami, or more accurately, Light Yagami’s children, would be of inestimable value during a coup. Capture the enemy’s queen. It was a powerful move.

There were very few Alphas positioned for that strategy to work. And again, they would have had to connect Ryuk Yggdrassill’s former mate with the current Light Yagami.

Two point two: Light Yagami is Kira. And they know it.

L scowled. Of course, that would mean that the Yggdrassills had confidently identified Kira, and he still hadn’t. He did not like the implication of having been beaten. Twice.

Although… Kira was indisputably and meticulously careful. Obsessively so. The odds of them successfully tracking the vigilante were as high as, unfortunately, choosing to shoot up a S.W.A.T. team.

Regardless, all options led where they were now. Light kidnapped, waiting to be toyed with by some one Alpha or another. The logical follow up punched L in the gut. They will want to breed him. The heart rate monitor sped as L calculated how long Light would survive in their custody before being raped.

The other Omegas, with the exception of Bianca Pillay, had not been sexually assaulted, but they were also virgins who would sell better if left untouched.

I claimed him… L remembered. He had carefully sunk his teeth into that long neck, over and over. If the end goal was to gain control over pliable, but valuable, breeding stock, Light would not be raped until L’s marks faded. Omegas generally couldn’t conceive by a sire other than the claiming Alpha.
The brunette also couldn’t be drugged until the bites healed, assuming XoXo truly did require the Omega to be unclaimed. We need to confirm its affectivity.

So. Seven days at best, probably less. L was not foolish enough to put faith in the criminals’ respect of his claim on Light.

The rapid pinging of the monitor slowed again, and L found himself back in the hospital room. Someone was breathing on his left, and L’s eyes found Matt sitting quietly beside him. I suppose this confirms how heavily drugged I am. The Beta’s presence had slipped his mind. Again.

His third successor had many valuable qualities; taciturnity was not one of them.

“What aren’t you telling me?” the Alpha snapped. The deadly calm tone combined with its scratchiness sounded doubly threatening. Light has a limited amount of time. Do not waste it.

Matt’s blue eyes widened in surprise, before he swallowed and submissively lowered his gaze.

Tell me…

The redhead hesitated, clearly preferring to remain silent. His recalcitrance tested L’s patience, and the Alpha followed his pointed glare with a pulse of even sharper pheromones. Matt…

The Beta resisted for a couple seconds longer, but, inevitably, huffed in defeat. He raised his head, but didn’t meet L’s eyes, fixating on the moon outside the window, instead.

“The body count.”

L froze.

His thoughts had immediately flown to the brunette Omega. Light Yagami was the beautiful centerpiece to this whole debacle and his was the fate the detective felt viscerally responsible for. They won’t kill him.
But…

Near? Watari?

There weren’t many people the detective cared for in this world, but the majority of them had been on that bridge.

And what of the people Light cared about? Chief Yagami? His sister? Kiyomi Takada?

L snarled.

Takada.

She had betrayed them. She had betrayed Light.

“You were shot first,” Matt murmured, softly, “The sniper got off at least two more rounds before the second shooter started firing. That’s when…all hell broke loose. We’re still sorting evidence, but it looks like they were counting on out and out chaos. That’s what got them Light…”

Obviously-- L blinked. The first shot. Fuck.

There was no reason to waste a bullet on a random pilot; not when the target Omega was not ten meters away, surrounded by dozens of armed Alphas. Shooting the world’s greatest detective could not have been an accident.

L recalculated.

The Yggdrassils knew that ‘L’ was involved with the case; they would have gotten that from the NPA. They could have guessed that the pilot was, at the very least, associated with L. They shot to kill. And, given those two facts, there was only a 2% chance that they did not know the pilot’s identity.

This implies I was their true target…
That was disturbing. That his most guarded secret was potentially common knowledge among one of the world’s most notorious packs. The beeping sped up. It would beget disaster, not only for L himself, but for his entire network. His informants would need to go to ground, the orphanage evacuated, his successors’ identities wiped, the safe houses, the- \textit{fuck}.

The raven forced three deep breaths through his lungs.

\textit{I’ve been compromised before…}

Rationally, even if they knew the pilot was going to be L himself, that did not mean they had his name or face.

\textit{Probably.}

But that begged another question: \textit{How did they get even that much?}

L growled mutely.

\textit{If I was the primary target, what did that make Light?} Did they simply hope to complete two objectives at once? Seize Ryuk’s ex-mate and assassinate the world’s greatest detective in one fell swoop?

\textit{The only way they could have known, for sure, that I would be on that bridge, in person, is if we have a mole amongst ourselves.} The seldomly activated irrational part of L’s brain vehemently denied it. \textit{Impossible… except, not.}

Only six people knew exactly where L would be at that moment: Light, Watari, Matt, Near, Gevanni, and L himself. The last five, L trusted absolutely. Watari was granted implicit confidence in all things, his successors each had earned his unshakeable trust many times over, and, besides clearing the background check that L had conducted personally, Gevanni was vouched for by Near. And L certainly hadn’t double-crossed himself.

So that left… Light.
He would not betray me.

Though…

The detective had dismissed it as too improbable after meeting and forming his own opinion of the Omega, but… L couldn’t be sure. This was the Yggdrassill heir’s mate.

Based on that alone, there is a 4% chance that this was all an elaborate ruse, designed to get to me through Light…

But, if that were the lamentable case, for the sequence of events on the bridge to have occurred in the order they did, Light would have needed to signal the shooters. It would have had to have been when they landed, since Light did not have means to contact them before. All his communications had been monitored and the Omega had only learned L could pilot an hour before he was shot. The image of Light extending the phone to him as his father called flashed across L’s mind. I had his phone. So… if I assume he is one of them, how did he signal the shooter to shoot me?

L tilted his head back into the rough pillow. He couldn’t have…

Probably.

Damn it. If it was anyone else, L would have concluded it to be impossible. But it was Light Yagami. The Alpha ground his teeth. On the surface, Light Yagami was unequivocally innocent. But, the detective was well aware that the surface of Light Yagami was merely an ever evolving mask, covering a boiling sea of manipulative intelligence.

Near will need to review the footage, to see if Light used an Omega distress signal or other silent communication before I was sh-Fuck. Was Near even alive?

The detective forced himself out of his own head and back into the present, noting that Matt had fallen mute yet again.

“And?”
The redhead still wouldn’t meet his eyes.

*He really doesn’t want to tell me…*

Of course, the Alpha could understand. L’s own train of logic had immediately hurtled into the criminal mind’s twisted maze, rather than calculate the odds that one of his own was permanently gone. So L understood the defiance the Beta was putting up. But that doesn’t change the fact that you. Will. Tell. Me.

“I want a full report, Mail,” L ordered. The Beta’s head whipped around at the sound of his given name, blue eyes wide. *Yes, you will face me and “Tell me what happened.”*

The Beta nodded slowly, submitting under L’s unwavering gaze.

A disconnected part of his brain reminded L that, had Light been in that chair, the Omega have resisted more. Of course, his second successor wasn’t in the habit of defying L’s orders left and right, and Matt seemed to be at the end of his emotional rope anyway. L’s knuckles went white gripping the sheets; he’d prefer it if Light were sitting here aggravating him.

“Oh honestly?” the redhead bit out through a clenched jaw, suddenly and impotently furious. “It was a bad fucking day to be a Yagami.”

L froze. *I suppose I agree with you. “Explain.”*

The single burst of frustration seemed to contain all the remnants of resistance the Beta had left; the redhead slumped against the chair, head cast back, gaze unfocused. “We really fucked up, L. We failed them. Badly.”

*Yes. I know. “Tell me.”*

Matt swallowed, pale throat constricting.

“Sachiko Yagami was found dead in her residence early Sunday morning. Officers found her
collapsed at the foot of the stairs, neck broken. Detective Kanzo Mogi was also found dead at the scene--multiple gunshot wounds. Detective Touta Matsuda is still in intensive care. He needed a heart and liver transplant, but coincidentally there was a sudden influx of those,” Matt noted bitterly.

L nodded slowly. *We knew the Yggdrassils took Sayu Yagami by force; this was a highly probable scenario. Light had to have suspected, even though he forced himself to keep going. But, still… Light’s mother. The raven could feel the phantom of the Omega’s future pain building in his chest; if-- when they found Light, the brunette would be coming home to a tombstone.*

“How is Chief Yagami dealing with the situation?”

At that, Matt’s head dropped down, face twisting.

*No… no.*

“NPA Chief Soichiro Yagami died en route to Takanawa Hospital. COD single gunshot wound to the chest.”

Black eyes squeezed closed. Light Yagami was now an orphan. Matt was right. *We failed them…*

“The press is calling it the Nihonbashi Massacre,” Matt intoned dully, “Fifteen injured, including yourself. Thirteen dead. All seven kidnappers, Detectives Shinichi Izumi, Yukito Shiraba, Yato Yukine, Hirokazu Ukita, Rika Inoue, and… Soichiro Yagami.”

“Sayu Yagami?” The girl’s name nearly choked the Alpha.

“Alive and secure,” the Beta’s tone turned dark, “She’s with Near.”

L pressed his head back into the pillow, trying to crush it. *And what the fuck is Kira doing right now?* Perhaps the hacker sat in a bathhouse, ignoring the news? Or was he there at the bridge, watching from the shadows? Did he even care? *Or is he lying unconscious, lost in Tokyo, waiting for the next XoXo injection?*

“Have you questioned her yet?
Matt leaned forward, bracing his elbows on his knees. “No. Not for lack of trying, though.” He sighed. “Physically, she’s fine, but… mentally…” The Beta shook his head. “I’m hoping she’s just scared. She’s an Omega, and she doesn’t have an Alpha. From the footage, it looked like she was barely holding it together during the exchange. And then…” the Beta paused, hands clenching around each other. “She saved Near’s life.”

The resentment L had been building against the girl deflated. The primary reason they had even landed on the bridge had been because Near deemed Sayu Yagami on the edge of a drop, and judged Light’s immediate presence mandatory for her health and safety. L had also planned on interrogating the kidnappers right there, before the Yggdrassills decided to tie up loose ends. Which it appeared they had done anyway.

*So Near was targeted too. Damn.*

“How so?”

“Like I said, you were shot first. The same shooter had sights on him next,” the redhead said, “Sayu took the hit.”

The moonlight turned sickly. Matt didn’t say it, but L knew he knew, too. Near was an Omega. Unlike a disposable abduction team, the Yggdrassills themselves would never, ever, shoot at an Omega, unless they had an astoundingly extraordinary reason. *Like taking out L’s successor…*

“She is alright, though,” L confirmed.

“Yeah. Flesh wound, nothing vital. Near stitched her up himself, down in the ER. The nurses threw a fit about it, but…you know Near,” Matt chuckled darkly.

For the first time since he woke, L felt an upward pull on the corner of his mouth. Near was more qualified to treat bullet holes than the Surgeon General. Of any country. Combined with a tongue that could slice deeper than the sharpest scalpel and nurses would be seeking psychological treatment after tangling with the white-haired Omega.

The two detectives allowed the small, but precious, good humor to linger for a moment, before Matt returned to topic.
“She watched them drag her brother away. And then held her father’s hand as he died. And if she saw her mother’s murder too…when they took her…” the Beta cringed, “I don’t know if she’ll make it. Most Omegas wouldn’t.”

*If she’s anything like Light, she’ll make it.*

“She’s attached herself to Near,” Matt added, grimly. “She won’t let go. Or can’t. Which, psychologically, makes sense. Her family’s gone. He disarmed the bomb, covered her during the shooting, treated her wounds. He’s probably the only person she’ll trust right now.”

L blinked. *Interesting.* Sayu Yagami would need to talk about her kidnappers. Presumably they had known something of value, if the Yggdrassills had taken the trouble to kill them. If she trusted Near, the male Omega should be able to get her to talk. After that, they’d have to get in contact with her Beta and find her counseling. *She’ll heal quicker once we have her brother back--* 

“L?”

The Alpha glanced at his third successor.

“I’m worried about Near.”

L’s eyes widened; that was not a phrase he had ever expected to come out of the Beta’s mouth. “How so?”

“He’s… Well, like I said, Sayu wrapped her arms around him and won’t let go. She hyperventilates every time an Alpha or Beta gets within five meters of them, so no one has been able to assess Near’s status. But…he’s not letting go of her either. He won’t let us sedate her, and he gets aggressive and defensive every time we try.”

L forced a heavy arm up to push a thumb against his bottom lip. *Near…*

“I expect he is distressed,” the Alpha rationalized, cautiously, “Of course, he has enough control over his pheromones that you wouldn’t scent it…” He looked hard at Matt. ”Are you saying you believe his judgment has been compromised?”
The Beta paused, then, very, very slowly, shook his head. “No. He’s still as obnoxious as he’s always been. He’s just… I think if he sees you, he’ll—”

“Has Mello arrived yet?”

I knew where Matt was going, and it wasn’t going to fix the problem. (And, if the world’s greatest detective had been shot, as the pulsing throb in his chest confirmed, there would be a question succession.) There was no way in hell the second in line was not en route.

Matt’s face fell. “Yes.”

So, I’ve been unconscious at least twelve hours…

L sighed and struggled up into a sitting position. He immediately pulled his legs to his chest, but the pressure it put on his wound prevented him from leaning forward into his preferred posture.

“You were hoping that Near would stabilized by scenting me alone and, therefore, would not need to see Mello.”

Matt scowled and twisted away. The raven let his gaze burn into the side of the Beta’s face.

“I assume that you have not put them in the same room yet?” The left half of the redhead’s face flushed. Matt… “You are deliberately risking Near’s mental wellbeing by keeping him from the Alpha he’s closest to.”

Matt cringed, even more guiltily.

L sighed, “However, in this particular case, your initial assumption was incorrect. Near does not need to see Mello or myself. He needs Light Yagami.”

“Wait,” the Beta choked, turning back, “What?”
L pushed his thumb deeper into his lip, contemplating. *Light, it appears you are very hard to let go of...*

“Near likely feels personally responsible for Light’s abduction. As you accurately pointed out, we failed him. Near knows this. Near is unaccustomed to feeling guilt, as it is something we minimize by distancing ourselves from the victims. Additionally, he spent significant time in close physical contact with Light. As you know, Light was so close to hypophysia when Near arrived, that Near felt obligated to sleep by his side and even initiate full body contact to ameliorate the rising symptoms as much as possible. While not his intention, those actions would have been enough form an emotional regard between two Omegas. Certainly not as strong as a true friendship, or even a positive acquaintance, but enough. And while Light complained about it, he allowed Near close to him. So now, Near is not only blaming himself for the loss of a witness, but also has to contend with the void created by the loss of a companion Omega.”

Matt frowned, presumably comparing his empirical data to L’s suppositions.

“Sayu Yagami is a suitable substitute,” L speculated, “though probably not sufficient. Near is likely aware that he is depending on her as a stopgap, just to keep himself functional, until he can psychologically detach himself from the loss.”

“That of course, that assumes that Near has emotions,” Matt muttered, sardonically.

L stared at the younger man until he lowered his head submissively. “You know he does.”

“Yeah… I know.”

“You still have not forgiven Mello.” This was becoming an irritatingly persistent problem; L had left it alone for the last several years, as micromanaging his team’s personal issues held no appeal for him, but it was clearly taking an unacceptable emotional toll on all three of his successors.

“He shouldn’t have,” Matt growled, reiterating the old argument.

L sunk an eyetooth into his thumb. “He’s an Alpha.”

And while this conversation was familiar territory, a Beta’s emotional insecurity was never his forte. *Perhaps if I locked the three of them in a cell for a week... After, we find Light.* “You need to adapt,” the raven ordered. “He is still technically Near’s Alpha. If Near wants to see him, you
“It’s not okay,” the redhead repeated, folding inward for a moment, before sighing. He leaned back and crossed his arms definitively. “Regardless, there are more pressing issues.”

Indeed… L tipped his head for the Beta to continue.

“Several officers witnessed Sayu Yagami getting into the ambulance with Chief Yagami, accompanied by a second unidentified Omega. And the hospital staff remember two Omegas arriving and being quarantined just before midnight. Our first priority was to secure Near, but what with Sayu being glued to him… Mello had to forge a license from the plane and make Gevanni Sayu’s Beta. Near doesn’t exist on paper, so we were able to get them both out of the hospital, pretending to be their Betas. But two distressed Omegas wrapped around each other drew attention. I’ve erased all written accounts and have a crawler looking for more, but I can’t delete people’s memories. At the very least, the Yggdrassills have a detailed description of Near.”

L grimaced. Yes, that was a risk we chose to take. Damn it all. He won’t be able to leave the safe-house for the remainder of the case. And the Yggdrassills had a long memory; they’d make record of this, and they’d wait. We’ll have to be very, very careful. With over two decades of active detective work, L was certain the larger criminal organizations around the world had accumulated enough data to guess that the real ‘L’ was Alpha, male, and under forty. While this meant they would not mistake Near for the world’s greatest detective. they would assume he was associated with, if not mated to, the ‘L’. A truly desirable target. Which would have consequences. Young, white-haired, male Omegas around the globe were in infinitely more danger now.

“It gets worse,” Matt continued, “The press got ahold of Light and Sayu’s names. It’s not surprising, given the amount of coverage Nihonbashi is getting, but it’s getting ugly. The NPA is under extreme pressure to produce the Yagami siblings.”

L felt like mimicking Light, and punching someone. Even if we find Light, he won’t be able to go home. Probably ever. The brunette had gotten away without changing his name once, and that’s only because Ryuk Yggdrassill was never caught, the trial was closed, and the files sealed immediately. Obviously, that tactic was not going to succeed twice.

We still have to find him first…

The Beta pressed on, “Reporters have already shown up at the Yagami residence, so that crime scene is fair game. The Nihonbashi coverage is ridiculous. But the biggest shitstorm was Sayu’s Beta.” Matt shook his head. “Overzealous idiot… Officers called him after Soichiro and Sachiko Yagami were both confirmed dead, so he showed up about eight minutes after Gevanni left.” Matt
trailed off, expression darkening. He swallowed, “You had just flatlined in surgery… I should have been able to stop him. When he couldn’t find Sayu, he went beserk. Questioned all the staff, called every officer in the NPA, and filed a Missing Omega Report on the spot. Then, he went down to the station. They’re a complete wreck, so reporters got to him, and convinced him to go on live Sakura TV, demanding Sayu Yagami’s return. Gevanni shut the broadcast down as soon as he saw it, and we have the fool under wraps now, but the damage was done. The press connected her and her brother. Then add in Kiyomi Takada and an unidentified white-haired Omega… Quite frankly, L, the word ‘clusterfuck’ seems most appropriate.”

L bit down on his thumb, hard. *Four missing Omegas*… Japan had not had such an atrocity in the over twelve years. “Has the NPA issued a press release yet?”

“No. ‘L’s been putting pressure on them to keep quiet for the time being. But a lot of their friends died that night. Their patience is non-existent, not even counting losing four Omegas in one go. The Prime Minister issued a statement yesterday night, vowing to recover them. Detective Izaya Orihara is spearheading the search.”

“Of course he is,” L grumbled, “He’s one of the Yggdrassill’s plants.”

“Yeah, well, he’s looking for Near. And has the support of the entire NPA to do it. With all the reporters crawling around the hospital, we had to move the XoXo victims. They’re stable, so we moved them to suites in your building. In theory, Near should be able to treat them there, but that’s only if he doesn’t need treatment himself.”

“What about Watari?”

The detective studied Matt warily. It was the question L had been dreading asking. The Alpha had kept hoping that Matt would report Watari was working some aspect of the case, possibly mitigating the damage, but the time for mentioning the greying Alpha had come and gone. At this point, the omission was glaringly obvious. From the pitying look on the Beta’s face, L almost didn’t want an answer.

*No…*

“He… hasn’t woken up yet.”

“Is he…?”
**Not Watari.**

“No. He’s in the ICU. One of the bastards who took Light put a bullet in his skull. He got lucky, they said it missed dura matter. he’s hemorrhaging pretty badly. They have to release the pressure every hour until he’s stable, but… L, it doesn’t look good…”

The raven wrapped his arms around his knees, staring blankly at the wall.

**Watari…**

Matt’s words were unprocessable. Impossible. There had been only seventeen days in the last twenty-four years that L had not seen or spoken to his mentor. Watari was *always* there.

L blinked back the stinging in his eyes. The old Alpha couldn’t die. L wouldn’t let him. And when he woke up, they would have Light Yagami back. He wouldn’t fail him. He couldn’t.

“Is Kiyomi Takada in custody?” L grit out. *That two-faced bitch is going to rot in the deepest darkest Omega hellhole I can find.*

“No,” Matt frowned, “They took her and Light together.”

“They did not *take* her,” L corrected. “She has been working with them for sometime.”

The redhead’s eyes narrowed. “Are you sure?”

“Yes.”

*She has to be.* There was no other way they could have gotten to Light. They had to make sure that he’d come; behind L’s black eyes, each piece of the puzzle slotted together perfectly. *They took his sister. That would ensure that, no matter what, eventually, he’d be drawn out. And to ensure they knew when, they put a human tracker on Sayu Yagami. Even if Light hadn’t come to the bridge, Takada would have faked distress, claiming she needed to stay near Sayu. Until Light was exposed. They would have had contingencies for the bridge, hospital, station, safe-house…*
And, once Kiyomi Takada got to Light, so too could the Yggdrassills. Despite his anger at the female Omega, L felt a knot in his chest release. Takada’s guilt lent credence to Light’s innocence.

“We will need to determine how long Koko Shintaro has been courting Kiyomi Takada,” L mused aloud, “I would assume Shintaro got to her approximately two months ago, around when the first XoXo victims began disappearing.”

L thought back to his first interview with Light. Mating agencies worked completely counterproductively to packs’ like the Yggdrassills methods. Shintaro wouldn't have been able to claim her, or Takada’s rep would have reported it. Though we’ll need to interview him to be sure. Nor would Shintaro have been able to mate the Omega. L snorted. Shintaro was probably making up for lost time; from what the detective knew of Yggdrassill higher-ups’ treatment of Omegas, Takada likely wouldn’t be able to walk for weeks.

“We should begin tracking Shintaro’s whereabouts immediately. If we find her, we’ll find Takada. Although, Shintaro herself will be able to give us Light’s location.”

Matt nodded and pulled out his phone.

The Alpha’s mind had finally begun to process at the rate he was used to. Sitting here is of no further use. When Watari woke up, he would expect the case solved.

“We need to move quickly,” the detective concluded. And undo as many mistakes of that night as possible. He glanced at the Beta. Get ready. All his successors needed to gird themselves for the maelstrom that was to come. They were mostly hidden behind the mask of ‘L’; the carefully crafted anonymity would shield them from the worst of the backlash.

Though even that was at risk.

Still, it should be enough to protect those three. From everything except the guilt. It had been a long time since L had had to correct so many of his own errors.

“Where is Mello now?”

The redhead glanced up. “Right now? He’s back out at Nihonbashi. He stopped by to see you and Watari as soon as he landed and touch base with me. We decided he’d cover for you with the NPA, but now that they’re asleep, he’s rechecking the crime scenes. Playing a sketchy-ass
NPA, but now that they’re asleep, he’s rechecking the crime scenes. Playing a sketchy-ass reporter–”

“Tell him to join us back at the safehouse as soon as he’s through. It should go without saying, but have him make sure he isn’t followed.” There are far too many tracks leading back there as it is.

L didn’t wait for a reply, swinging himself off the bed, onto his feet. His thorax screamed bloody murder, but he managed a precarious balance.

Sort of. Matt had to catch him.

“Jesus L!” Matt shouted. He dropped the phone and tried to shove the detective back into bed. Gently. “You just took a bullet to the chest. Obviously you survived, but not for lack of trying. You need to stay still!”

“Am I stable?” L growled, pushing back.

The Beta gave him a scandalized look. The raven smirked, yanking at the tubes and monitors on his arm. The question left Matt only one option. If Matt wanted to convince L to remain in the room, he would have to lie convincingly enough to fool the world’s greatest detective. Don’t even think about it.

The Beta grumbled, “You were shot. You need to-”

My injury is entirely irrelevant at this juncture. “I need to find Light Yagami.”

“I’ll bring you a bloody laptop,” Matt groaned.

“That would be the least efficient method of investigation,” L retorted, pushing past the Beta. Fucking hell, this hurts. “Has Kite Gingsu been moved?”

Walking hurt a lot more than standing, but the distance to the door was clearly finite. His Beta should be able to--ow--tell us Light’s preferred hand signals-- ngh. Damn it. L made it to the door, and slumped against the wall. That will help determine if he did communicate with anyone while on the bridge.
“Yeah, he was,” Matt muttered, trailing behind the detective with his arms extended. “I put him under a basic alias. He hasn’t been briefed yet and thankfully he’s not watching the news, so he’s cooperating for now. Though when he hears that Light’s been taken, that’s probably going to change…”

“How long have I been unconscious?” L panted against the frame.

“You were shot at 10:56 p.m. Saturday night. It’s 1:27 a.m. Tuesday.”

Fuck. That was longer than expected; Light had been missing for over forty-eight hours. Fifty hours, thirty-one minutes.

“Order the NPA to schedule a press conference for 8:00 a.m. L will address Japan directly, but won’t be taking questions. Prepare the liaison for that.” L paused, making sure this was the right choice. “Sayu and Light Yagami died on that bridge.”

Matt’s lips pressed into a grim line, but he nodded and began texting instructions. I’m sorry Light, but this is the only way.

The world’s worst patient cracked open the door, breathing heavily, and glanced down the brightly lit hall. They appeared to be in a recovery ward without too many active attendings bustling about. Good…

L rolled around the doorframe and began awkwardly slinking down the hallway, bracing himself on the metal guard. If the staff had been trying to dull his mind with their medication, then they had succeeded admirably. But if they’d been trying to numb the searing pain, they failed entirely. Of course, the current dose was probably calculated based on data Matt had provided from previous treatments. (As a general rule, L refused any dose high enough to impair his judgement.)

“Wait! L--Ryuzaki! Damn it!” The Beta hissed, scurrying to catch up.

“Where is Kite Gingsu?” L whispered. When Light visited he was in 214, so you would have switched his floor. Third floor, south end?

“What?” the Beta’s head jerked up from his screen. “L, it’s past midnight. He’s asleep.”
“Unimportant. Where is he?” Fucking hell. L put a hand to his chest. Did your ribs hurt this much, Light?

“We need to go two floors down,” Matt answered, putting his arm around L’s waist, and tugging the Alpha to lean on him. “Third floor, Room 354.”

The duo made their way cautiously through the corridors, heading towards the Beta’s room. L mentally pulled up the man’s file. After Sayu Yagami, this was perhaps the singular soul who knew Light best. Perhaps I should ask him if he thinks Light is Kira…

They paused in front of the elevator, and Matt let L sink into one of the waiting chairs. L leaned back, keeping alert eyes flicking between the crossing corridors. With the exposure they were already facing, the detective would greatly prefer if no one witnessed an Alpha and Beta of their description skulking into the recovery room of a missing Omega’s chaperone.

They ducked into the elevator just in time to avoid what looked to be a rather crotchety Beta, making late night rounds. The momentary spurt of energy left L gasping for breath. When they reached the third floor, Matt darted out faster than L could follow, returning seven seconds later with a wheelchair.

L glared at him.

“It was parked outside the nurses’ station. Sit or I’ll make you sit.”

The Alpha rolled his eyes. It would be faster.

Matt pushed him down slightly less empty halls, towards their goal. Thankfully, they did not have to break into an Omega ward, or else Matt might have succeeded in keeping L in check. With the help of security.

Soon enough though, L soon found himself inside Light’s Beta’s room.

The Alpha forwent Matt’s assistance, standing and sliding open the door. The redhead snagged the wheelchair, darting off to hide the only evidence of their passing. L stepped into the room
under his own power, slumping against the wall. As promised, Light’s Beta was asleep.

Black eyes narrowed. *Could Kira be a team? Light certainly wouldn’t be the submissive, but could you?*

L limped forward and prodded the patient. “Kite Gingsu!”

The Beta’s military history was evident. Gingsu jerked awake, immediately aware. His grey eyes snapped to L’s and the Beta made a grab for the Alpha’s collar.

The detective’s training saved him. Of course, that meant he fell backwards into the same cushy chair Light had occupied three days ago. Alpha instinct demanded he overpower the Beta, but his chest wound begged to differ, so L settled for a low warning growl and willfully suppressing the pain. The chaperone’s eyes narrowed and he struggled into some semblance of a defensive posture.

*I suppose I am invading his room…*

L forced himself to tone down the aggression, adopting a pacifying scent. The Beta hesitated, realizing the stranger in his room wasn’t attacking.

*Good. Now, let’s talk.*

A spark of recognition flickered across the Kite’s face, and he slowly nodded his acknowledgment of the Alpha.

“You’re Ryuzaki.”

“Yes.” L stared owlishly at this person of interest. *He has a decent memory… that will be problematic, if he is loyal to Light and Light is working for the Yggdrasills.* L winced. He would be beyond disappointed if someone with the Omega’s potential was wasting it by associating with criminals. *It’s equally likely that he is Kira.*

“I left Light in your care. Where is he?” the Beta growled.
L blinked. Loyal indeed. I can see why Light chose you. Unfortunately, the Beta was most likely going to blame ‘Ryuzaki’ for the Omega’s disappearance. (Not that L disagreed with him.)

“Light Yagami has been abducted,” he drawled.

The Beta’s eyes flashed. “I left him in your care.”

“Yes.”

You cannot image how acutely aware of that fact I am. But this was an active investigation and such depressive thoughts would get them nowhere though. He was L.

“Though arguably, he would be just as gone had he stayed in yours,” the detective countered.

Gingsu’s lips parted in surprise. After a tense pause, his gaze turned appraising, eyes still flinty. “That hardly matters. Even if you aren’t responsible, you have no right to be his Alpha if you can’t protect him.”

It was L’s turn to blink. You still think I am courting him?

The Beta was surprisingly dedicated to the Omega. Logical, considering he has no living relatives. Kite Gingsu has probably dedicated more to Light than most Betas are to their charges… Unimportant. But he was still wrong. I will get him back.

“You are incorrect. The Alpha Light chooses has the right to be his Alpha. But that is not what I am here to discuss.”

The detective had the satisfaction of seeing the Beta struggle for a counterargument. L pressed ahead before Gingsu could derail the conversation again.

“How often do you chaperone Light Yagami?”
“That is none of your business,” Gingsu snapped, “As you say, Light hasn’t chosen you to be his Alpha, and I have no intention of betraying his trust by discussing his private affairs with some foreign Alpha who can’t even keep him safe.”

L barely held back the fury coursing through him. He needed this man’s cooperation. “If you truly care about his well being,” he growled, “you need to answer my question. What hand signals does he use?”

“Are you joking? It’s illegal for me to tell you that! He’s an Omega!”

“I am fully aware of Light’s Dynamic. However, we have video evidence of the attack on him. I need to know what he saw and everything he did.”

The Beta frowned at L, considering. After a long pause, he spoke carefully. “I will review the footage. I will tell you if he used any signal I recognize. That’s all I’ll give you.”

L nodded. Perhaps if the chaperone saw exactly what they were dealing with, he’d be a little less of a hinderance to the case. *Your reluctance is justifiable, but you if get in my way or prevent me from finding Light, I will destroy you, Kite Gingsu.*

“You work for L, right?” the Beta asked abruptly.

“Yes. If you wish, I can have L confirm my identity.”

Gingsu nodded. “Do it.”

*He’s smart. Again, Light, you chose wisely.*

“Matt?” L called.

The Beta slipped quietly into the room. Gingsu shot him a glance, then glared at the Alpha. “I was unaware L resorted to hiring children--”
“L’s methods are not your concern,” the raven snapped. “This is Matt. He’ll handle putting you in touch with Director Kitamura of the NPA. The Director in turn will put you in touch with L.”

The redhead quirked an eyebrow at L, then shot the older Beta a quick nod.

L rose to his feet, carefully hiding his current lack balance behind a blank face. *Presumably Mello can handle being me for another hour.* Especially since Matt had probably sent a dozen texts already, warning the blonde that L was loose in the hospital.

“After L’s confirmed our identities, you will need to relocate to our safehouse for the duration of your recovery. You can review the footage of Light’s abduction there. Do you agree to these terms?”

Light’s chaperone eyed them both suspiciously. *Do not get in my way.* Slowly, the Beta nodded.

L forced himself to move haltingly towards the door. *Good. That will make protecting him easier. And his expertise on Light will be of use. Though, I’ll need to review Light’s history with the Yggdrassils…*

“He won’t choose you.”

L glanced over his shoulder. “Hmm?”

“Light,” Kite repeated, “You should know that he has never chosen an Alpha and never wanted one. He tolerated you. But don’t expect him to ever submit to you.”

Chapter End Notes

So... Netflix live-action Death Note... I haven't forced myself to watch it yet. On a scale of one to ten, how drunk do I need to be?

In other notes, thank you to everyone who has been so awesome and patient with this story. I know most of you love Light, but I kinda threw him off a bridge last chapter, so he was out of commission and could not comment. Unlike you all, who have been fantastically supportive and given me great motivation to keep going, even with eight-thousand-word-plus chapters!

*happy author*
Theoretical to hypothetical to realistic

Chapter Summary

L’s theory may not be very popular, but not for naught, he is the world's greatest detective.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

National Police Agency
Kanto Division
Case: #OMP193487
Date: April 20, 2020

Case Summary

Prepared by Senior Detective Suichi Aizawa

October 31, 2019: Omega Light Yagami was reported missing by his father, NPA Chief Soichiro Yagami, after the seventeen-year old honors student failed to return home. The case was assigned to Detectives Suichi Aizawa and Hirokazu Ukita, reporting directly to Director Koreyoshi Kitamura.

According to six independent eyewitness accounts, Light Yagami was last seen at 17:26 p.m. on October 31, outside his high school, walking home after a study group at the library. School surveillance showed the Omega exiting school grounds in the company of his Chaperone, Sidoh Yao. Sidoh Yao, OCL #R44728, was reported missing four hours after the disappearance of Light Yagami (Case #MP305465).

Investigators quickly determined that Light Yagami had been abducted along the route between his school and residence. This conclusion was supported by the finding of a cell phone registered to Light Yagami outside the residence of Etsuya Nakatsuka (civilian, Beta). As Nakatsuka was confirmed to have been visiting family in Kyoto at the time of the crime and because he promptly surrendered himself for questioning upon his return, Nakatsuka was cleared of suspicion during November 2019. The only fingerprints found on the cell phone belonged to Light Yagami and Sayu Yagami (sister, Omega). Detectives hypothesized that Light Yagami had become aware of the abduction in media res and thrown the phone in an attempt to establish an evidence trail. The phone contained a partially typed text message: ‘grry7se4’. Detectives further surmised that Light Yagami attempted to leave a description of the vehicle used to abduct him, translating the message...
as ‘grey sedan’. Other than Light Yagami’s cell phone, no physical evidence of the abduction was found, and the exact site of the crime was never determined.

Financial records of Sidoh Yao revealed a closure of all personal accounts in the hour before Light Yagami disappeared. The Bureau of Omega Safety flagged the activity and dispatched representatives to interview the chaperone; however, Sidoh Yao had already disappeared, indicating the kidnapping was likely aided and abetted by, or at minimum, known to, the chaperone beforehand. On December 28, 2019, the body of Sidoh Yao was found at a remote dump site near Raiden-yama. Cause of death was undetermined, as the body had been burnt thoroughly; positive identification was made solely by deep tissue DNA profiling. Detectives classified the abduction as a pack-related activity, due to identities of other victims found on site (Cases #OMP305465, #MP305301, #MP305419, #MP305453, #MP305454, #MP305433, and #WC19283) and similarities to other dump sites linked to organized crime.

No leads in the case of the disappearance of Light Yagami occurred between December 29, 2019 and March 3, 2020.

On March 3, 2020, NPA officers responded to an emergency call placed from a private residence in Kohinata, Bunkyo. A transcription of the call is attached, and the caller has since been identified as Light Yagami. Upon entering the residence at 04:34, responding officers encountered a highly-distressed Omega, claiming to be Light Yagami. Two Betas, Toshikazu Kato and Sakai Nori, were arrested at the scene and charged with multiple instances of Omega victimization, as well as a series of charges in connection to other cases (see attached).

‘Light Yagami’ was immediately transported to The University of Tokyo Hospital, where medical examination confirmed injuries consistent with Omega enslavement and abuse (medical report attached); however, the Omega refused both internal examination and a rape kit analysis. Family Chief Soichiro Yagami and Sachiko Yagami arrived on site at 05:52, and confirmed the Omega was their son, Light Yagami, who had been missing for 124 days. Later on March 3, 2020, during a debriefing interview with NPA Omega Relations Liaison Akane Tsunamori, Light Yagami accused Ryuk Yggdrassill as his primary assailant. Light Yagami claimed Ryuk Yggdrassill had paid Sidoh Yao to participate in his abduction on October 31, 2019, after which, Light Yagami was remanded into custody of Ryuk Yggdrassill. Furthermore, Light Yagami described being held at a secondary location in Esahi, Hiyama. Upon search and seizure of the Esahi site, officers recovered four other living Omegas: Sakuro Kurusu (#OMP302341 Osaka Prefecture), Noboru Funabashi (#OMP304544 Wakayama Prefecture), Minoru Yamato (#OMP209212 Toyama Prefecture), and Ninsei Handa (never reported missing). The bodies of two more Omegas were found on site (Harunobu Murakami #OH3982733 and Shuichi Kuroki #OH3984734). Video evidence of extended abuse and rape of all seven Omegas by Ryuk Yggdrassill and several accessory Alphas were found in a safe on the premise.

A warrant for the arrest of Ryuk Yggdrassill was issued on March 4, 2020. Detectives initiated a nationwide manhunt, but were unable to locate the suspect.
On March 20, 2020, Prosecutor Mikami Teru filed for an emergency trial in absentia of Ryuk Yggdrassill for crimes committed against Light Yagami. As a prominent member of the Yggdrassill Pack, Ryuk Yggdrassill was presumed to have fled the country at, or shortly after, the rescue of Light Yagami from the Kohinata site. The prosecutor’s motion was based on the high profile nature of the Alpha involved and the status of the Omega as the son of a prominent member of the NPA. On March 27, 2020, Case #OMP193487 was approved for Trial in absentia, under Honorable Judge Sasaki Tadayoshi, to be heard immediately. The physical evidence collected at locations of Kohinata and Esahi, medical reports, and statements provided by Light Yagami and the other four Omegas were heard between March 30 and April 3. On April 5, 2020, Ryuk Yggdrassill was convicted in absentia, for the crimes of Human Trafficking [of Omega Light Yagami], Abduction [of Omega Light Yagami], Bribery of a Government Official [Sidoh Yao], Assault [of Omega Light Yagami (57 counts convicted, 416 counts reported - 308 of which were dismissed under the Heat-Induced Assault Clause)], and Unlawful Imprisonment [of Omega Light Yagami for a duration of 122 days]. Charges against Ryuk Yggdrassill in twelve other cases were levied between March 4 and April 15, 2020.

On April 16, 2020, Ryuk Yggdrassill was labeled an enemy of the State of Japan, and, at the time of this report (April 20, 2020) is actively being sought by international law enforcement.

Case #OMP193487 was closed on April 5, 2020. Light Yagami received further medical and psychological treatment at The University of Tokyo Hospital, and has since returned to his parent’s guardianship. Former Master Sergeant Kite Gingsu was assigned as replacement to Sidoh Yao and chaperone to Omega Light Yagami on April 16, 2020.

Further details, evidence, statements and records are attached.

Signed: Suichi Aizawa, Hirokazo Ukita, Koreyoshi Kitamura

“Mello.”

The detective didn’t even have to sniff the air to smell the roiling insolence. It was obvious the younger Alpha stood motionless in the entryway, glaring palpable daggers into L’s back.

“So…you’re not dead.”

“No,” L drawled, ignoring the dripping sarcasm in favor of his tea. “I am not dead. Would you prefer it if I was?”
Indignant silence answered him, a brave attempt at insult, until, finally Mello backed down with an audible *pfft*.

L smirked. They might be out of practice working around each other, but the kid hadn’t changed much. *Light probably would have punched him too.* The detective winced. *Anyway…*

Mello could sort himself for the moment. (Or more likely, Matt would stop hiding out on the balcony, and then Mello would sort himself out.)

The older Alpha returned his focus to the Nihonbashi photos; the evidence wasn’t any prettier, even forty-nine times through. L rotated the satellite image. *Two shooters.* That’s what it all came back to. Matt and Mello had found their nests on opposite sides of the river, covering nearly every angle. Even so, they both had to be extraordinary marksmen. As the world’s greatest detective, L tended to keep tabs on those kind of people, and even though the shortlist of suspects was satisfyingly short, none of those names boded well for the investigation. Koko Shintaro was, of course, right at the top. *So who else would she hire? She profiles as a classic narcissist, so hiring a sharper shooter than herself would be unthinkable. Unless someone else did the hiring…*

L took a sip of tea and turned to the second monitor. The search he had begun Thursday night stared back at him, openly mocking. *Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and now Monday…* The list of unmated Omegas in the Tokyo area, diagnosed with broken ribs, was still one. The Alpha bit down hard onto his thumb. *If he is Kira, they will kill him.*

Yet a third monitor blinked into focus. Watari’s search for scientists entering Japan had just ended with four potential suspects: a Beta post-doc with the pharmaceutical genius, an bonded Alpha-Beta pair with Omega immunology specialties, and another Beta, this one with a cousin in the American Yggdrassill branch. L absently rubbed at the itchy bandages under his cotton shirt, wincing when he pressed a little too hard and pain pressed back. *Grr… wounds… almost as frustrating as Omegas. Except impossible to misplace.* He adjusted Watari’s parameters to do a deeper delve into the suspects’ financials.

*I should check if Matt got the Kiras’ chemicals traced—oh hell.*

A spiky oaky scent interrupted his concentration. He bit back a growl. *Alphas. Just as annoying as Omegas.*

Mello was growing impatient. Without a buffer, unfamiliar Alphas were bound to ruffle each other’s feathers. Most organizations with more than one Alpha held mandatory annual retreats (less for educational purposes, and more to de-unfamiliarize the Alphas). Watari enjoyed a recurring
barb about incorp —no, focus damn it.

The detective stood abruptly. Now was as good a time as any to time to test his theory.

L glanced his second successor as he stalked over to the patio door. Even the recent end to his teenage years hadn’t seemed to temper the permanent cloud of rage surrounding Mello. Meeting the sidelong gaze of his superior, the younger Alpha bared his teeth in a silent snarl, before returning to the report on his phone. You’re angry with me? L cocked his head. That’s new… but I suppose I am too.

“Matt,” L called through the doorway, intent on retrieving the spontaneously shy third successor.

He caught the flicker of emotion across Mello’s face, which only intensified as the Beta and his three laptops slunk into the condo. L dug his hands into his pockets, flexing; as far as he knew, Mello and Matt hadn’t been in the same city in three years.

They were out of practice too.

Irrelevant.

L snagged a headset from the nearest desk (Gevanni’s) and started down the hall toward Light’s former room.

“Follow me.”

From what Matt had reported, the current occupants had sealed themselves in there shortly after arriving and hadn’t emerged since. Matt, as chaperone interim, had tried to reason Near out, but the white-haired Omega was choosing to brandish his notorious stubbornness. L frowned at the shadowed end of the hall. When Gevanni gets back with four sick Omegas, he’s not going to have a choice. (Near’s Beta had been reassigned to guard Watari and the previous victims, until they could be moved.)

The door at the end of the hall was closed.

Had it been Light in the room, L wouldn’t have bothered knocking. That would have caused the
Omega to hiss and spit, and maybe even throw a lamp him. *I deserve electronics flying at my face right about now.* The lingering scent of the missing Omega gave him pause, reminding L just how fuming Light could have been about such a superfluous social etiquette. *Damn that Omega.*

Instead, the detective rapped twice before he pushed open the door and strode into the room deliberately, but making a show of avoiding the nest.

No lamps came his way.

Sayu and Near were huddled in the center of the bed, with Sayu half seated/half laying in Near’s lap, and the male Omega wrapped around her, typing away at half-speed on a portable handheld. The girl seemed partially comatose, not even responding to the opening door. Nor did Near spare L a glance. Neither seemed bothered by an intruder’s presence, so long as said intruder kept his distance.

Then Mello and Matt sidled in.

Near’s eyes and Sayu’s entire body snapped up. Suddenly the room was filled with angry glares on all sides. L frowned. *Guess they’ve been getting along well in my absence.* The unexpected shift in pheromones had Sayu squirming back into Near’s chest, knocking his work off the bed. The first successor remained mostly impassive, save the blue eyes, while he curled his arms tighter around Sayu. Light’s sister whimpered, curling into a tight ball, trying to hide from the six prying eyes.

L tamped down a growl, torn between exasperation and protective instinct. The girl was irking him, in more ways than one. *Light would have been on his feet, challenging me to the teeth.* Of course it wasn’t her fault that her brother set an impossibly high bar; she was just a normal traumatized teenage Omega in acute distress.

With two angry Alphas in the room. Watari’s social trainings finally caught up to him. *Oh right.* This was a recipe for disaster. *And we really don’t have time.*

The detective stepped forward, ignoring the warning hiss from Near and the quiet snarl from Mello, and addressed Sayu.

“I need to speak with these three and, seeing as how you are incapable of separating yourselves at the moment, you will need to wear these,” the L said, extending the headphones.
The girl’s eyes flicked back and forth between him and the headset, until Near squeezed her round the middle and she finally took them. L waited until they were settled firmly over her ears, before addressing his successors with the hypothesis he’d been building for the last six hours.

Before somebody did something stupid.

“I have a theory concerning the events of Saturday night. However, it’s credibility depends on every action each of you has taken in the last twelve months. So before I present it, I want you to evaluate how secure you feel with the safety measures we have taken to protect our identities. Or to be more specific, how many liabilities have you each accumulated that I do not already know about?”

The tension in the room subsided considerably, and next round of looks shared by the successors were less murderous and more professionally cautious.

L stared all three of them down as they traded glances. A slip that doesn’t make it to Watari is rare, but if it exists, now is the time. If neither Omega, nor Alpha, nor Beta had made a mistake, there was only one reasonable explanation of the pattern of shots fired at Nihonbashi.

As expected, Near was the first to respond. Good, his dependency on Sayu does not seem to detract from his deductive reasoning.

“I assume this is in relation to method of attack on us, or more accurately you, at the bridge,” Near asked. L kept his face neutral until the Omega continued. “No liabilities on my end have arisen in the last four years. The last one being Dr. Xavier.”

L nodded. Fair enough. The Omega was the most reclusive of the three, the one most watched and guarded most closely; the one with least opportunity to incur recognition. To the best of L’s knowledge, Near had left the orphanage only five times since his arrival fourteen years ago. Even after presenting, he had spent his heats at a stay house on the estate. There were probably less than thirty people who even knew Near existed. Until Saturday night...

The Beta, however, was a different story.

“Matt?”
The redhead reluctantly unlocked his jaw and answered quickly. “One of my aliases was burned in Bangkok last May, though the baddies didn’t get farther than proving I wasn’t who I said I was. They were also arrested shortly after, and all got quickie death sentences. Other than that...no flags raised — until the riot at the hospital. Someone may have glimpsed me when Light jumped in.”

“Lovers?”

The red of his hair flooded his face. There was an another angry growl from Mello (and a small whimper from the deaf Sayu), but L ignored it. It’s not like this was a shocking new development.

“In the last year?” Matt muttered, “Fourteen. Twelve of them, arranged one-nights, no names. One was part of the Zhang seduction in Beijing, and one regular. In Queens.”

“The one in Queens?” L prodded.

“Thinks I’m a flighty artist, blowing off painter’s block. Did a full background check and risk assessment after the second meet.”

L thumbed his top lip considering. There hadn’t been any point in asking this question of Near, The laws ensuring their equality virtually guaranteed no Omega could ever have a one night stand. Betas didn’t have the same restrictions, but Matt always followed their rules of discretion, and L seriously doubted that the redhead had overlooked anything that could compromise them. And he vaguely remembered Watari handing him an ‘all clear’ report on Matt’s escapades in New York.

“Alright... Mello?”

The other Alpha was clearly fighting back a deluge of angry pheromones, so L patiently waited for the blonde to control himself. He flicked glance over at Sayu; she seemed to be holding herself together, considering.

“I have my in with the Brighton pack,” Mello spat flatly, “Four undercover ops in isolated cases in the last two years.”

“Lovers?”
“...none.”

L blinked. That was odd. Alphas typically had the hardest time abstaining from physical gratification; their instinct to mate and breed was the strongest (excepting Omegas in heat). In Britain, there were houses with the express purpose of anonymously pairing Alphas with willing partners. No money exchanges hands, so they weren’t brothels, but it was understood that entering the establishment was code for easy hookup. If Mello hadn’t even been frequenting places such as those...

“Priests?”

“Same one as always.”

L nodded. *As expected.*

The detective took a moment to study the bedspread, making sure he hadn’t overlooked any other possibilities. *Unfortunately, I am that good.*

“Very well. Then here is my hypothesis: the first shooter was Beyond Birthday.”

Also as expected, the room went dead still. No one spoke for several seconds.

“You got a confidence level on that?” Matt asked, shakily.

“92%,” L replied, “if your reports are accurate.” He glanced around the room, taking in Near’s stoic visage, Mello’s angry one, and Matt’s tense one. “The first shot of the assault was at a grounded helicopter, and the only reason to take such a shot, would be if the Yggdrasills knew who was inside. B knows that I can fly. The fact that Near was targeted second, as opposed to Watari who would have been the obvious choice in an operation to destroy ‘L’, supports this theory. Aside from those of us in this room, there are only five people who have seen both my and Near’s faces. Roger, Watari, Gevanni, Beyond and Light Yagami. And while two of the five are capable of firing a long-range rifle, only one’s whereabouts were unaccounted for at that moment.”
L paused. Technically, he didn’t know if Light was capable of firing such a weapon. *I suppose I wouldn’t be surprised.* But, as on Thursday night, Light could not have been in two places at once. There was a very small possibility that Kira was the shooter; he had the wild-card factor, but then again, Light Yagami couldn’t be in two places at once.

His successors picked up the conversation while L continued his train of logic.

“So, assuming it was Beyond, he shoots you first, then targets me. People on the bridge realize there’s a sniper, so the second shooter starts firing. We have been assuming that Koko Shintaro was one of the shooters, so if L’s theory is correct, then she was the second,” Near extrapolated.

L had come to the same conclusion, but it wasn’t overly solid. *Very possible… but she’s a dominant Alpha who would have planned on taking the first shot.* Alphas like that had control issues.

“But… Mels, how many shots were fired?” Matt queried.

*Of course, she might not have counted on B’s considerable ability to go rogue…* L certainly couldn’t fault her for that.

“Don’t have an exact number, but I compiled bullets recovered, witness statements, camera footage, possible fire rates of the rifles used, the whole caboodle. Twenty-six confirmed. Ballistics rushed it, so we do know that all twenty-six came from one of two rifles. Nine from the first rifle, confirmed based on the bullet they pulled out of L—”

Mello hadn’t gotten around to entering this evidence, so this was news to L. *Nine shots, B? Me. Near… what else was there for you to shoot at?* L shifted to take the the strain off his left side. *They could have just been peppering the scene to buy the abduction team some time, but that assumes B was following orders. Which certainly doesn’t match B’s personality. He was shooting at something.*

“—and eighteen from the second. If a third shooter was there, he didn’t hit anything. Of course, there also could have been more shots from just the two shooters that we missed.”

No. *There were only two shooters.* As far as L had been able to track, Beyond had disappeared into the underworld shortly after leaving L’s organization. *If the Yggdrassils were worried about me… My involvement with this case is not secret.* L tilted his head and dug his thumb deeper into the center of his bottom lip. *The Yggdrassils know I am working with the NPA. They could have
sought B out, based on reputation. Or, maybe, he followed us to Tokyo and offered his services…?

“You said every angle was covered by those two vantage points, correct?” Near accused, “So we can conclude that a third shooter would be superfluous. Combined with the lack of any evidence to suggest a third shooter existed.”

L continued to let the conversation swirl along without him. It’s possible he’s been waiting, and Saturday was simply an opportunistic attack. Shintaro wouldn’t have expected him to start firing… but when he did, she had no choice but to join in…

“If L’s right and Beyond was the first shooter, why did he take more shots after L and Near were down?”

L’s lips twitched, but he didn’t look up; Matt was asking the right questions. Near and Mello had better catch up.

“B would not have been shooting randomly,” Near pointed out, “Do we know what his targets were?”

Mello huffed, “In order? L. Near. Mas-”

Masato Sonezaki. L nodded to himself; that tracked. It’s possible B knew Sonezaki and held a grudge, He always did hate Alphas…

“-ato Sonezaki. Soi-”

No! For the first time since he’d let the successors debate, L’s attention jerked away from the bedspread. His black eyes locked on Sayu, still obviously tense in the middle of the bed. B killed Light’s father?

“-chiro Yagami.”

Near shifted uncomfortably in place, and Sayu chose that moment to sit up and uncurled herself. She can’t hear—oh. L toned down the subtle rage leaking off of him. The four males watched to
see what she would do, but Sayu just shifted so she could wrap her arms around Near instead of
the other way around. She then took the time to send each of them a deaf, but pointed glare. L
blinked. *That’s something Light would do. If he ever would have acceded to the headphones in
the first place.*

When it became clear the Omega was done, Mello continued.

his ticked off.

did you shoot him?*

“The rounds from the second shooter account for all the other bodies and injuries,“ Mello finished.

*So if Shintaro’s goal was taking Light, and Beyond’s was killing me? Maybe that’s it…*

“But that does not explain how B or the Yggdrassils knew either L or myself was going to be on
the bridge in the first place,” Near pointed out.

“The dismantling of the synthesis lab in Hong Kong made quite a few headlines,” Matt noted. “I
artistically embellished as many reports as I could get to, but there was no hiding our involvement
entirely.”

*True, China had been rather noisy.*

“But, another question, why would B shoot Detective Yagami?” Near asked.

The other two successors fell quite, reshared a questioning look, before the conversation died out
entirely. It seemed they didn’t have the same insight into B’s twisted mind as L did.

“To punish Light for being claimed by me,” L answered.
All three successors’ attention jerked to the Alpha, suddenly realizing L hadn’t spoken since the start of the debate until now. *Obsessive as ever, B.*

They all shared a moment of guilt for the fate of the Omega they had failed to protect, before Mello broached the other option.

“You gave us a 92% chance,” Mello said. He jerked his chin at Sayu, “I assume her brother being a traitorous asshole represents the other 8%?”

*You are correct.* L kept his face blank; it was true that their missing Omega could have been in on the whole thing. And while Mello was deducing his thought process accurately, L was not keen to voice his doubts about Light.

It was Matt who reacted instead. “Light Yagami is very clever.”

*Yes, he is,* L agreed.

“But if the Yggdrassills hired B, we will need to consider the possibility that kidnapping Light Yagami was only one of two primary goals,” Near continued, glancing at L, “The other being your assassination, along with whatever team you brought with you.”

L’s gaze darted to his first successor. The Omega’s tone was neutral, but his speech was a few millisyllables per second too quick, and that spoke volumes. *Matt was right to be worried.* At the orphanage, Near was treasured, as both first successor and as one of only three Omegas ever to attend; this was quite literally his first true brush with death. That was what Matt had assumed had rattled Near; but seeing the Omega now, L knew he himself had been right, just not as right as he could have been.

By putting them together, L had ignored the potential for competition. Near had been concerned with proving himself against Light; that had unintentionally forged a connection, abet a tenuous one, but a relationship, with a victor and a loser, nonetheless. Except Light had been out maneuvered—*like us all*—but importantly, not by Near. He’d been bested by B. *So Near will naturally worry that he has never surpassed B.* It was a fair concern. Near and B had never had the chance to be evaluated head-to-head, what with B’s dramatic exit from Whammy’s.

Until now.
“It also raises the question if B’s involvement on the bridge was a one time thing, or if he’ll be working with them from now on,” Matt muttered, without looking up from his phone screen, interrupting L’s epiphany.

L considered the matter. B would stick around as long as he was having fun, which they had no measurable way of knowing. They would need to operate as if he was, at all times, lurking over their shoulders.

“I should have stayed in fucking Europe,” Mello growled.

Matt and Near paused to look at the blonde. Mello just rolled his eyes, “Because if he’s smart, L’s gonna lock us down.”

*Mostly correct again, Mello.* It was apparent that they were all waiting for him to speak, but L was more concerned with following the line of thought he’d just hit upon.

“The four of us can’t be in the same place!” Mello snapped, when it became clear L was otherwise engaged. “We should call Gevanni and tell him to meet Near at the airport. He, the sister, and the other Omegas should be on the jet, out of Tokyo yesterday! They can choose where to go after take off, so if things go bad here on the ground, the first successor is secure. But all three successors *and* you under one roof is just fucking stupid.”

“Are you sure you don’t just want me gone?” Near asked.

Mello snarled and rounded on Near, advancing a step towards the bed. Sayu shot up, fear in her eyes, tugging Near backwards urgently. Matt just huffed and turned away. To which Mello backed up a pace and took a deep breath before answering.

“I won’t say it’s not a perk,” the Alpha snarled. “But you’re the one who got himself compromised—”

“My colleagues and I had a rather strong disagreement today.”

The room went silent. Even Sayu froze. L’s lips twitched; it was good for them to remember who the Alpha here was. Not that he was particularly interested in addressing any of them right now. He just needed to think in silence for a moment.
My colleagues and I had a rather strong disagreement today.

She had been talking about bonding.

Kiichiro Osoreto, the Alpha from the helicopter over Takanawa, had mentioned bonding during interrogation as well. His Omega, even after three pups, still refused to bond with him. He’d agreed to the Yggdrassill’s mission to kidnap Light from the hospital, because he’d been offered a solution to that problem.

And Near. His first successor had come to Tokyo because he believed XoXo had the ability to stimulate aetherics.

It all came back to bonding.

This means my only concern is finding Light Yagami.

The silence dragged on as L considered their options; Mello did have a point. Someone knows Light’s history. So, is he with the other seven Omegas? Or is he’s with the Alpha making this powerplay.

That someone almost certainly wants Light drugged with XoXo, so they would take him to the lab first. But then, they’d need to take possession of him as soon as possible. So, they might find Light with the other missing Omegas. It took them almost a month to drug the first test subjects… thirty-one percent chance, decreasing by the second…we might have time.

The fastest way to find the synthesis lab would be to track the scientists needed to run it. And if Near got the list of necessary chemicals together, then they could narrow down locations. Of course, none of this might matter if Beyond interfered. He’ll be playing his own game, and if he realizes that I’ve marked Light, no doubt he’ll change the rules.

We need to tracking Koko Shintaro; she’s the most tangible link. She had visited Light at the mating agency, she was very likely the second shooter, and she was one of the few Alphas in position to overthrow Shishio Yggdrassill.

“Um…excuse me?”
L looked up in surprise. The other three heads also turned to look at the female Omega in shock. Sayu seemed to be struggling for words, not having used them in about forty-eight hours, but L waited for her to continue.

“Can I…can I take these off?” she asked.

L nodded, and Near lifted them off her head.

“Are you the ones looking for my brother?” she asked L. She didn’t need to have heard the conversation to recognize the Alpha in charge.

“We are.”

“You’re not cops,” she stated hesitantly, “You’re L? Right?”

The raven shot a glance at Near, who shook his head. So she figured it out on her own.

“Yes.”

She also glanced sideways at the white-haired Omega. “Near also said you’re going to tell everyone that we—that Light and I—died.”

L looked at Near again, who was staring back, not defiantly, but definitely with some heat. “We are,” L replied cautiously.

“So I don’t exist anymore right?” Sayu asked, biting her lip. L nodded. She hesitated, eyes flicking between Near and L, before asking “Is there anyway that they will trade Light for me?”

Near hissed, and Mello scoffed. Matt mostly just looked sympathetic. L tamped down the Alpha part of him that was both for and against this idea. Your sister is willing to die for you, Light. Would you be angry if I let her? If there was any way it could work, L would have had a serious moral dilemma on his hands. But there was no chance.
“No. Light is their target.”

Sayu swallowed, her eyes slowly glassing over. “Because Ryuk took him before right?” she choked out, “Now he wants him back?”

“Possibly.” L kept his face carefully neutral.

“I want to help,” Sayu declared suddenly. “Near said there was a chance you were going to send us away. For our own safety…” her face twisted over the last part. “I want to stay.”

“Do you know how to investigate crime scenes?” Mello interjected, ignoring L. Sayu shook her head, and the blonde Alpha barrelled on, “Profile criminals? Work a computer?”

“I’m not an idiot!” Sayu yelled. “I know I’m not as smart as Light—no one is as smart as Light. But I’m not useless just because I’m not a genius or an Alpha, you asshole!”

Apparently, Mello, who had been snarked at by Near for years and years, had never been actually yelled at by an Omega. The look on the blonde’s face was definitively comical, enough for Matt to snicker loudly.

For her part, Sayu seemed to be realize she’d just challenged a foreign Alpha, but for the sake of her brother, wasn’t going to back down. She took a deep breath, before turning back to L.

“Near said you were shot. I’m a nursing student; I can help with that, since it looks like you already tore your stitches.”

L blinked. The warmth on his shirt hadn’t been a priority, and Near was more than capable of dealing with it. But if Sayu saved them time, he wasn’t going to complain. He also, despite Mello’s opinions, wasn’t planning on sending the Omegas away. B was probably watching the airports right now anyway.

“I’m not leaving,” Sayu reiterated.
“How well do you know your brother?” L asked, tilting his head.

The girl started in surprise. Mello looked furious, but L worked on keeping his scent toned down so they wouldn’t start a fight over the Omegas. But this girl might be the best source of information on Light Yagami and time was of the essence.

“He’s my brother!”

“Do you know his hand signals? Or has he spoken to you about the last time he was taken?”

Sayu shuddered, clearly thrown by the mention of the last time this had happened. *She’s probably lived in fear of this exact situation since then.* Near reversed their positions again, letting her lean against him while she got herself under control.

“Light… He—he likes to protect me. He wouldn’t tell anyone what they did to him, not really. But when we got him back, he had nightmares…so I kinda guessed some of what happened to him when he was yelling and I was trying to wake him up. But as soon as he woke up, he stopped talking about it.”

“Did he ever describe where he was kept?” Matt added, “Who he might have seen?”

“Um…” Sayu shook her head, “he told the police, and it came up during the trial, but mom and dad didn’t let me watch. The only name I ever heard him mention was Ryuk.”

L sighed. Of course Light had been as meticulous at seventeen as he was now at twenty-three. And he had probably done everything he could to hide it all from his sister. The Alpha turned to his first successor.

“How many of the XoXo Omegas’ families have arrived?”

“None…” Near answered quietly. “And none are coming.”

L sighed. *Unfortunate.* But it made protecting them easier.
“Mello, am I correct in assuming you snuck two Alpha corpses into the Takanawa morgue?”

“Yes…?”

Good. That should convince the Yggdrassills that L and Watari were dead. B would be more skeptical, but he would also know that L’s organization would be closely monitoring anyone who came to check the corpses, so it should slow him down some.

“Very well,” L decided, “Near you will continue focusing on the XoXo synthesis angle. Watari had a list of thirty four suspects entering Tokyo in the last month who have the expertise to make it. Narrow it down. You will also need to monitor all people entering Tokyo, and make sure Ryuk Yggdrassill isn’t one of them.”

Near nodded and slipped out of the bed, Sayu still attached, to grab his handheld.

“Sayu,” L said, and the Omega froze obediently, “you will need to work on function without physical contact with Near. There will be sick Omegas arriving, and you will provide them with medical care.”

“And you shoulder?” she asked waspishly.

L shrugged, painfully. “If you have time.”

At that point, Near tugged Sayu’s hand and pulled her out of the room. With the two Omegas gone, the Alphas calmed considerably.

“Mello, you will deal with the Nihonbashi incident. Your priority will be to track the snipers,” L instructed, “The first shooter—who we will assume was Beyond—fired nine shots. B wouldn’t have wasted six rounds, so we will find what he was shooting at. You should look at any affiliations Masato Sonezaki might have had, and determine where and when he and B crossed paths.”

The second successor was wise enough not to argue. He did growl and stomp out, but if that meant they learned what B was up to, L did not care.
And then there was one. The detective turned to his third successor. “Matt, I want you focusing on the geographic profile. We have bullets, scientists, and crime scenes. Focus on the power grid if you have to; a synthesis lab would need the electricity.”

Whatever it takes…

He hesitated before deciding. “And simultaneously, I need you to pose as Kira.”

Matt did a doubletake. “Bossman say again?”

“Send the NPA a tip, as Kira would,” L ordered. It might be the only way to protect Light. *If they took him as Kira, then he’s already dead. I must work under the assumption he is still alive.* It might also have the added benefit of drawing out the real Kira, if the real Kira happened to *not* be Light Yagami.

“Why?” Matt asked.

L just stared owlishly, letting his dark gaze answer the question.

“Fine, fine. And you are going to be doing what exactly?” Matt conceded.

L’s lips curled distastefully.

“I’m going to go speak to Shishio Yggdrassill.”

It wasn’t easy, and a rather large part of him would really rather not, but somehow, in a dark room, on an uncomfortable, narrow bed, Light opened his eyes.

Chapter End Notes

Happy 2018!

I am months late, and I shall make no excuses. I apologize.
But to answer the most common question, I have not abandoned this work! I have opened this chapter every single week since the last one posted, trying to comb it into submission, but it resisted quite magnificently. I estimate four bottles of wine went into the making of this chapter alone (as it took months, please do not judge that number too harshly).

But aha! It has happened. And I thank you to everyone who sticks around to read it. You guys are the best!

End Notes

... 

So what’d ya think?

...

Terrified author hiding under the writing desk. Feedback is utterly addictive for us writers, so good or bad, let me know!

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!