

# Not good enough

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## Kapitel 9: Cracks

Tatsuya felt a bit too worn out that night so the pair just slept. They went back to Akita the next day with Atsushi carrying both their bags and Tatsuya carrying their drinks, snacks and lunch. He fed his boyfriend some pretzels on the train and read the rest of his book. He also listened to a most hilarious conversation in which their captain asked Atsushi how to score a boyfriend. That one had no idea but he reiterated what their coach must have taught them: be polite, don't intimidate, fulfill your daily structure plans. He also recounted how Tatsuya was proud of him because he defended their hoop against those players that had picked on him. For Atsushi that seemed to be the reason why Tatsuya had decided to become his boyfriend. Well enough, it was simple but not too far off the mark.

"So I need to look for a girl picked on by others." The captain nodded with a serious expression. "Then I save her and she'll be my girlfriend."

"Yeah, you need to be her hero," Atsushi told him just as serious.

"Then she won't be frightened of me and maybe she'll look past my chin." Which the captain stroked right that minute. Tatsuya was sure that the beard stubble was more off-putting than the chin but he wasn't the one giving love advice right now.

He was completely content to listen to his boyfriend giving advice to their senpai. And who knew – maybe it would work out. Tatsuya was doubtful but love had strange ways sometimes. After all he had his own personal hero now – he did his best not to snicker – and could always play the damsel in distress. Atsushi supported him in his own way with his own methods. Being his hero was okay.

Back in Akita the other Omegas in his dorm asked him about his trip. Of course they were far more interested in his relationship than the basketball championship. Other than wishing him good luck for the InterHigh finals they were quiet about the topic. But a relationship seemed to be a reason for endless debates, chatter and memory sharing. They had a family dorm for Omegas with children (and mated couples) and theirs for single Omegas. He normally tried not to mingle with them because their only topic seemed to be how to score the best Alpha. This time though he wanted at least a few people to envy him. Most of them did not know Atsushi so they were cooing over a photo Tatsuya had taken with his cellphone.

"He's eye-candy! Just look at those muscles. Can he lift you?," one of them asked.

"Just look at all the sweat, how much does he work out?," another asked.

Just for a bit Tatsuya liked to glow in the attention. It was soon broken by one Omega asking: "Isn't that the giant from the special classes? I thought he was a half-wit."

"He is mentally disabled, yes." He continued to smile. "That's no reason not to love

him."

"I think that's a rather strong reason. We won't have jobs, we can only try to mate with the most caring but also richest Alphas we can find. Why would you sell yourself so cheap?" It wasn't mean, just brutally honest. The pink-haired Omega talking to him seemed tired beyond his years.

"It's not cheap, Atsushi cares a lot. He saved me from bullies, he looks after me and does his very best to please me. He might not be the smartest but he's good to me."

"He'll be a social case forever. All of them are. He might be sweet as a grape but he won't ever make a cent in his life. If you choose to be with him it would mean to willfully choose prostitution for the rest of your life. How dumb can you be?"

Tatsuya remembered now. The boy's name was Minato. He was a second year that was by no means a single Omega. His parents had sold him at thirteen years old. He was only going to school because his mate was a forty-something-year-old guy that wanted his Omega grown-up before bedding him again. The boy certainly knew about decent and not so decent Alphas.

"I'm sorry about your parents but mine would support me no matter what I did. Even if all went wrong and I had two kids by the time I left school, they would simply take me back and help me raise them. So I feel free to choose my own mate."

The other boys all looked at him with big eyes. Only Minato showed open resentment. He scoffed and said: "Well, good for you. Then go and have some children who'll be dependent on you for the rest of their lives."

Tatsuya decided not to correct him that Atsushi was like this because of an injury, so their children would be perfectly normal. It wasn't the point. The focus of these boys was to secure a mate that would let them raise their children in peace with enough money to support them. It was essential to them because a wrong step would mean living on the street and prostituting themselves instead. It wasn't the same for Tatsuya. His parents made a ton-load of money and would never abandon him. So he did not need to feverently look for the best Alpha to bed.

He could actually choose to be with Atsushi even if he really never made a cent in his whole life. Living for love, just because you could ... what unimaginable freedom. It was something all of these boys did not have. He stood and left for his room. Suddenly their admiration tasted like nothing but ash.

"So how was your trip, darling?," his mother asked over the phone.

"It was great, thank you." He smiled just hearing her voice. "We won the preliminaries and the regional championship."

"Way to go, Tatsuya! That's great." Her enthusiasm was never fake, she had even come to watch some matches back in America. "So what's next?"

"The InterHigh finals. There are four regional champions who'll play in the finals. Those are Kaijo, Touou, Rakuzan and us. One of them will become this year's national champion."

"Your team must be really strong. Rakuzan was the other school you thought about applying to, right? The really expensive one."

"Yes, it is. It's also the reigning champion. I haven't seen them in action yet but their players are rumored to be top-notch. It's also the school with the most known captain in the country. Atsushi went to middle-school with him."

"Who is Atsushi?" His mother sounded surprised. Why didn't she- oh, he had used his last name before.

"Murasakibara. It's his first name," Tatsuya explained.

"Oh, your roommate. So it went well?"

"Err ... yeah. Uhm-"

"Are you pregnant?" She sounded neither angry nor excited, her voice was rather toneless.

"Of course not!" He sighed deeply. "I do know how to use a condom, alright?"

"So you did use them. Imagine my surprise." Well, that was pure irony.

"I did not." He looked left and right to see if he was alone. "I just sucked him off, okay? Don't fret it. He's so huge, he would just have ripped the condom."

"Oooh." His mother giggled. "Sounds like a great catch."

"You just had to joke about that." Tatsuya rolled his eyes. "And yes, he is."

"So was that another affair or can I actually meet a boyfriend for once?" That seemed to be a prospect she actually sounded excited about.

"Well, I ... I mean ... he is, but-"

"You really have a boyfriend? Cool!" Way too excited! "Can you send me a picture?"

"Uhm, yeah." He pushed a few bottoms on his phone to send her the one he had also shown his dormmates. "It should be there in a second."

"Oh, my, he's seriously hot. He's still growing up, lanky, uncoordinated and unsure about himself but with a bit more self-confidence and age, he'll be a gem."

"You can get that from just one picture?" He knew his mother was extraordinary but that was a lot of information from just a glance.

"He just screams dorky teenager. Give it time, he'll grow into his role. He just needs support and reassurance. He does not value himself enough. It's in the way he slumps his shoulders. Having you as his boyfriend will make him grow in a good way."

"That's pretty accurate, mom." Tatsuya smiled again. "Being cared for makes him grow like a neglected plant."

"And is he good for you or are only you good for him?"

Straight to the heart of the matter, huh? He answered: "I don't know yet. When I see him grow it makes me proud. It's all tingly when he plays, especially when he plays for me. I want to cuddle and kiss him when he acts like a child and ... well, something else when he acts all mature."

"You're seriously in love?" His mother sounded astonished.

"Oh, shut up!" He felt himself blushing. "He's ... he is precious to me, okay?"

"My baby is growing up." She let out a deep sigh. "Is he as smitten with you as you are with him?"

"I ... don't know", he barely whispered, "he thinks I am beautiful. He trusts me and he listens to me and he does stuff for me he wouldn't do for others. Words aren't his strength but his actions ... I think he really likes me."

"How about you two come visit us? I'd like to get to know him. Even if it won't work with you two I want to know who your first boyfriend is. When is your next school holiday?"

"Uhm ... summer. We have a summer camp, then InterHigh finals and then we have a bit of time. But I don't know if he is allowed to go on a trip to America. And if his mother has enough money, she seems to care for him by herself." Did he have a food budget because there wasn't enough money? It was not like he was getting fat or something.

"Oh, don't worry, we can pay for a ticket. If his mom worries about him coming, I can talk to her if you like. Just give me a number, I'll call her." Same as always, his mom was awesome.

"I'll speak with Atsushi and his mom first. I never met her, I don't know what kind of

mother she is. I'll call you once I know her feelings on the matter."

"And your boyfriend's! Don't forget, they tend to get nervous meeting future in-laws for the first time."

"I'm not marrying him!," Tatsuya growled into the phone. "Also, I don't think Atsushi will worry. He's ... he is not the brightest, okay? If I tell him that you'll like him he'll just accept it at face value. He does not worry, you know?"

"Everyone does, Tatsuya. You will worry, so he will worry. It's what your body says, it overrules the words out of your mouth. Your voice trembled just now. We won't eat him, okay? I'm just curious and I miss you. So please show up once in a while, with or without a boyfriend." He could practically see the indulgent smile on her face. "You're my everything, you know? Take care."

"You too, mom. I'll call," he promised.

Tatsuya asked Atsushi to meet him at lunch under the tree they often took as a meeting point. His boyfriend showed up with a big smile on his face but sulked when he saw Tatsuya unpack his lunch.

"What's the matter?," he asked.

"I thought you called me out for sex." Atsushi sat down beside him.

Tatsuya just blinked slowly before asking with a shocked voice: "What?"

"Akashi had Kuroko suck him at lunchtime."

"I am not Kuroko." The Omega recoiled a bit. "Sex is ... you know, what you experienced is sex. It's rather meaningless. Boyfriends make love, that involves feelings, it's special. So you make love on special occasions, not because you have a break and nothing better to do."

Atsushi looked at him for a long moment before saying: "Can you make love and have sex as boyfriends?"

Good question. He'd always gone for sex, it was easy and without complications. It just wasn't what he wanted with Atsushi. But maybe Atsushi wanted nothing but sex? Was he even able to get the difference?

"I guess you can," Tatsuya mumbled but looked away. How often could he say no if Atsushi wanted sex? Would that be the only way to sleep with him? Was his boyfriend even able to enter into a deeply emotional connection?

"You don't want to."

The Omega blinked. What? He looked back at his boyfriend.

"You don't want to have sex. It's not okay to sleep with someone who does not want that. It's rape. I'll lose you if I rape you. Right?" Atsushi wrinkled his nose. Oh ... so he had caught up on his scent.

"Yes, that's right." Tatsuya smiled at him. "Sex is for people who aren't special. But you are special, so ... I only want to make love with you."

"Okay." His boyfriend smiled at him. "So ... how do we get to making love?"

Cute. It was such an innocent question. Atsushi just wanted to please him. So he said: "How about I come to your room tonight and we'll see where we end up?"

Atsushi seemed to think about that for a moment before he replied: "Does that mean I need to tidy up?"

"Yes, you need to tidy up beforehand." Tatsuya smirked.

So his boyfriend sulked again.