

Cote 171

Chapter 171: The Reasoning Game

"Starting tomorrow, at 1 PM and 8 PM, you will go to the designated room to take the exam. On the day of the exam, the group members will be posted on the room."

"Also, during the first meeting, remember to introduce yourselves in the room. Once you enter the room, you are basically not allowed to leave during the exam period."

"That's all for the explanation of this exam. If there are no questions, you may leave now."

Chabashira Sae collected their documents, still showing no expression on her face, as if she were just handling official business.

Her earlier probing of Kaoru Mitoma seemed unintentional.

"Um, aside from introducing ourselves, what exactly are we supposed to do in the room?" Hashimoto Masayoshi asked.

"Depending on your mood, after introducing yourselves, the remaining time is yours to decide what to do, as long as you stay in the room for an hour," replied Chabashira Sae.

"A completely free exam?" murmured Hashimoto Masayoshi.

Soon after, Chabashira Sae asked them to leave the room and wait for the next group of students.

"The key to the exam is the VIP Student, huh? Seems troublesome" said Hashimoto Masayoshi.

"Mitoma, have you noticed anything?"

Kaoru Mitoma glanced around the hallway.

They seemed to be the first students to leave the room and in those closed rooms, Honami Ichinose and the others were probably listening attentively to the exam rules.

"Selecting some students from each class, reorganizing them into a group and then, through the VIP Student and the exam results, presenting us with choices that seem to involve cooperation, competition, betrayal and maximizing personal gain."

"In reality, there's only one outcome, which is something the school has always emphasized" Kaoru Mitoma paused.

"The person who discovers the answer the fastest can skip the exam process and directly clear the game. The so-called supremacy of strength is unreasonable."

"Finding the VIP Student as quickly as possible?" asked Hashimoto Masayoshi.

Kaoru Mitoma looked at Yamamura Miki beside him.

She was lowering her head, seemingly trying to reduce her presence.

"If the VIP was Yamamura-san, what would you think?"

Suddenly called by her name, Yamamura Miki was startled, her body trembling slightly.

"I'd try to help Yamamura conceal her identity and then ask the princess what to do next" replied Hashimoto Masayoshi.

"What if there's more than just Yamamura as the VIP's and you also know the identities of other VIP's?"

Seeing that Masayoshi Hashimoto was deep in thought, Kaoru Mitoma continued.

"The school's rules are clear at a glance. The VIP is the key to this exam. Many might get caught up in the superficial mystery of who the VIP Student is, turning it into a game of trust akin to 'Among us.'"

Although Sae Chabashira hadn't elaborated much, it was likely that most people had fallen into a chain of suspicion based on the rules.

The VIP Student wouldn't trust the group members and the group members wouldn't trust the VIP Student either.

For example, if the VIP Student revealed their identity to others in an attempt to achieve Outcome One, someone might betray them outright, leading to Outcome Three.

Or, even if the VIP Student disclosed their identity, there was no guarantee that the others would trust them completely.

While the materials provided earlier stated that forging text messages was prohibited, the school hadn't forbidden students from exchanging phones.

The VIP Student could swap phones with a companion and then manipulate students from other classes.

If the answer was wrong, the respondent's class would lose 50 points.

"However, all of this is a trap set by the school," Kaoru Mitoma said.

"Since the school has ensured that the number of VIP Students will be absolutely fair and impartial, there must be a reasonable selection rule. Otherwise, Chabashira-sensei wouldn't have mentioned earlier that 'strict adjustments have been made.'"

Masayoshi Hashimoto tentatively asked.

"Can we deduce the complete selection rule based on the known VIP Students?"

"Not just the VIP Students themselves, but we are also clues. Think about it—why did the school summon us separately? Wouldn't it have been more convenient to explain the situation first and then announce the group members?"

That seemed to make sense.

Masayoshi Hashimoto looked thoughtfully at Miki Yamamura.

"Another point is that while the school requires us to participate in group discussions, it also says that the content of the discussion is up to us and we can leave whenever we want once the time is up. It feels a bit strange."

Miki Yamamura cautiously moved a little further away, instinctively hiding behind Kaoru Mitoma because Masayoshi Hashimoto's gaze was somewhat intimidating.

"So, the discussion itself isn't important; what matters is the members who are present?"

"The only thing we're required to do is introduce ourselves. Isn't that rule a bit odd?"

"It suddenly feels like we've been thrown into a deduction game" Masayoshi Hashimoto suddenly let out a bitter smile.

"I'm not good at this kind of thing at all!"

Kaoru Mitoma smirked.

If you weren't good at it, how could you keep up with my train of thought?

"Anyway, there's no use thinking about it now. We'll only know the answer tomorrow."

"Hahaha, if I were the VIP Student, I'd tell you and the princess."

"Maybe I'd get bored and tell others just to end the exam early."

"..."

As they chatted, they arrived at the elevator.

While waiting for the elevator, Masayoshi Hashimoto took out his phone, seemingly reporting the situation to someone.

"Sorry, I reported the list and everything you just said to the princess."

"I actually wanted you to tell her."

"Tsk, your relationship seems a bit off," Masayoshi Hashimoto said, as if fishing for gossip.

"You won the last bet, right? Did you end up doing anything inappropriate to the princess?"

"More than you can imagine," Kaoru Mitoma didn't voice his thoughts but instead asked.

"Why do you call Sakayanagi-san a princess?"

"Because she's cute?" Masayoshi Hashimoto looked at him strangely.

"Lolicon." Kaoru Mitoma didn't expect he'd have the chance to say this line.

"Hey, hey, hey, don't just label someone as a pervert!" Masayoshi Hashimoto got flustered.

"Got it, it's just that the person you like happens to be a loli, right?" Kaoru Mitoma said as he walked into the elevator, then looked around.

"Strange, where's Yamamura-san?"

"I'm here." Miki Yamamura weakly raised her hand behind him.

Kaoru Mitoma couldn't help but fall silent.

What's up with this girl's presence?

Previously, because Hashimoro was by her side, it didn't seem strange.

But now facing her alone, it's as if she's like air, hard to notice her existence.

Even perverted desires rarely appear towards her, only some trivial wishes occasionally pop up.

Compared to Sakayanagi Arisu and Kamuro Masumi, she's practically like a passerby.

[Heh heh heh, such a weak presence is perfect for the invisible man to act! Ravage her body thoroughly!]

[Cover her mouth, you can play with her all day]

[I want to experience the feel of Yamamura-san's hands]

[Lick Miki Yamamura feet until they're wet]

[Suck on her fingers]

Chapter 172: The Answer to the Exam

Not long after returning to his room, Kaoru Mitoma sent messages to Kikyo Kushida and Kamuro Masumi, asking them to share their group lists with him.

After thinking for a while, he also asked Katsuragi, requesting him to send the entire list of Class A.

Soon, Kamuro Masumi replied.

Her group was Rooster.

The number of people in the Rooster group was about the same, with members from Class A besides Kamuro Masumi, including Ai Morishita, Taiga Tsukasaki and Emi Tamiya.

A group that simultaneously gathered members from the Sakayanagi faction, Katsuragi faction and neutral faction, unlike the harmonious Snake group, they would likely make the exam quite troublesome in the coming days.

Kaoru Mitoma looked at the Rooster group's list.

Each rule actually has its internal logic.

If the school selects the VIP from each class and then arranges them into each group, the selection range would be too large.

For students to determine who the VIP is, they would have to return to their class and think about the school's selection rules, which doesn't align with the school's arrangement of regrouping students.

Therefore, the most convenient method is to select the VIP from within the group, not only ensuring that students compete and think within the group but also aligning with the school's logic in planning this exam.

Since the VIP is selected from within the group, there must be corresponding clues within the group itself.

To find this clue, Kaoru Mitoma needed to put himself in the school's position and answer a few questions.

First, why gather students separately?

Because separate gatherings have more advantages than centralized explanations, allowing students to focus on their own group and immediately notice their teammates.

Second, why divide into twelve groups instead of eight or sixteen?

Because the cruise ship's cabins aren't enough?

No, the key to this problem is why the twelve groups are emphasized twice?

The twelve groups are arranged according to the twelve zodiac signs.

They could have simply referred to them as the first, second, third groups and so on.

Is it about the order of arrangement?

Kaoru Mitoma suddenly thought of something.

He typed the list of the Snake group into the notes on his phone and then rearranged it several times.

Student ID? Birthday? Height?

It seemed that apart from the Student height, he didn't know any of the others.

He couldn't possibly go door to door asking for everyone's student ID, could he?

No, if he could think of it, the school could too.

This special exam is testing the students' thinking ability, not their ability to gather information.

As Masayoshi Hashimoto said, this is a reasoning game.

Although student IDs, birthdays and some private information cannot be ruled out, they probably shouldn't be used as references because it would be too troublesome.

Kaoru Mitoma rearranged the list of the Snake group members according to the Japanese syllabary.

Honami Ichinose, Kyosuke Okitani, Hayato Kikuchi, Yago Komiya, Miki Yamamura, Hiyori Shiina, Kaoru Mitoma...

Among the twelve zodiac signs, the Snake is the sixth.

The answer should be Hiyori Shiina.

Thinking this, Kaoru Mitoma's expression turned strange.

He then rearranged the list of the Rooster group based on Masumi Kamuro's list.

The Rooster is the tenth and the corresponding name is Ai Morishita.

Surprisingly, they were all familiar names.

Kaoru Mitoma was a bit surprised, He would go ask Ai Morishita tomorrow.

If she happened to be the VIP Student, then his guess was almost certain.

At this time, Katsuragi sent the lists of four groups to Kaoru Mitoma, including Masumi Kamuro's Rooster group.

Since the exam briefing hadn't ended yet, it seemed it would continue until around 9 PM.

Kaoru Mitoma continued rearranging and soon found more and more familiar names.

The VIP Student of the Ox group was Yume Kobashi, the VIP Student of the Rabbit group was Kei Karuizawa, the Horse group was Minami Setsuya from Class D and the Dog group was Shigeru Moriyama from Class B.

Were these answers correct?

He wasn't sure yet, but at least he could confirm that the school was deliberately guiding the students' thinking.

Most people would probably limit themselves to finding the VIP Student within their own group, neglecting the Privileged Students of other groups.

This was also why the school intentionally arranged group discussions, making students ignore other groups and focus their attention on their own group.

Kaoru Mitoma replied to Katsuragi, asking him to send the remaining lists later, without revealing his own speculations.

Just as he was about to send a harassing message to Airi Sakura, Arisu Sakayanagi suddenly sent him a message.

"Hehe, Mitoma-kun is still as good as ever at guessing others' thoughts~"

She must have already received Hashimoto's report.

"I heard your subordinates are about to betray you."

"It's fine. Once I win, they'll naturally come back, and even more loyal."

"With twelve groups, theoretically, we can gain 600 class points. With you here, our Class A will be over a thousand points ahead of Class B."

"Hehehe, that sounds quite harsh. Mitoma-kun thinks I can't surpass you?"

"Theoretically, you can."

"In that case, why don't you come over to my side?"

"It's late at night. Isn't it inconvenient for a guy like me to go to a girl's room?"

"..."

Arisu Sakayanagi remained silent for a moment before continuing to send a message.

"Would you like to go to the meeting point with me?"

"There's no need anymore."

"I see. It seems Mitoma-kun is a bit ahead of me. I was originally planning to take a walk and chat with you, but I didn't expect such a reply. Suddenly, I feel so lonely~"

"You're being too emotional."

"Fufufu, if Mitoma-kun says that, then the bad things you did to me before won't be our little secret anymore~"

"Do I really have to come over?"

"It's fine if you don't want to come now, but let's meet briefly tomorrow. I'm very curious about Mitoma-kun's reasoning."

Kaoru Mitoma put away his phone.

For Arisu Sakayanagi, whether it was Class A, the Katsuragi faction, or the Sakayanagi faction, they were all just toys to her.

As long as there was something more entertaining, she would actively approach it.

In other words, no matter how outstanding Class A's performance was on the uninhabited island, Arisu Sakayanagi wouldn't care.

Because she knew that the person who contributed the most was Kaoru Mitoma.

At this point, even Masayoshi Hashimoto guessed that Katsuragi was Kaoru Mitoma's accomplice and their actions naturally couldn't escape Arisu Sakayanagi's notice.

Moreover, the two of them had a one-year agreement and Arisu Sakayanagi was eager for Kaoru Mitoma to step into the spotlight.

This way, their confrontation would be more interesting, rather than hiding behind Kohei Katsuragi as he was now.

This indirect confrontation was uncomfortable and the showdown Arisu Sakayanagi was looking forward to wasn't like this.

"Let's meet at the coffee shop at nine tomorrow morning. As a reward, I'll bring Masumi-san along. You haven't done it with her yet, have you?"

He didn't expect her to add a reward.

Kaoru Mitoma fell silent.

He was tempted.

Chapter 173: A Sure Win

The next morning, Kaoru Mitoma still woke up to the sound of Kikyo Kushida's in the bathroom.

"I saw Horikita at the Dragon group last night. Hmph, that guy was clearly tempted by the rewards after hearing the exam explanation!"

After using the bathroom, Kushida started reporting to Kaoru again.

She and Suzune Horikita were in the same group, along with Arisu Sakayanagi, Kouhei Katsuragi, and Kakeru Ryuen.

Class A: Kouhei Katsuragi, Arisu Sakayanagi, Shinji Matoba, Koharu Yano

Class B: Sayo Ando, Ryuji Kanzaki, Hitomi Tsube

Class C: Takumi Oda, Hidetoshi Suzuki, Masashi Sonoda, Kakeru Ryuen

Class D: Kikyo Kushida, Yosuke Hirata, Suzune Horikita

...

This group gathered the most outstanding students from all four classes on the surface.

If Honami Ichinose were also in it, it would probably be a king versus king situation.

According to the Chinese zodiac, this group was the fifth, the Dragon.

"Send me the screenshot of the message later," Kaoru Mitoma said.

The exam was scheduled to start at 8 a.m and there was still about half an hour left.

"Huh? Isn't your control freak nature a bit too much? If I were the VIP, I'd definitely tell you!" Kushida was getting annoyed.

"The real problem is Horikita. What if she's the VIP?"

"If she's the VIP, we'll just answer her name," Kaoru Mitoma glanced around the room.

Apart from Totsuka Yahiko, who was still sleeping, he was the only one left in the room.

Hashimoto and the others were probably out having breakfast.

"That's what I thought too, but that's exactly why it's tricky. She's not going to tell us if she's the VIP" Kushida was clearly troubled by this.

Since Kaoru Mitoma had already told her about his contract with Horikita Suzune, she was now even more eager than him to initiate the plan against Horikita.

"How about we make a bet?" Kaoru Mitoma suggested.

"If Horikita becomes the VIP, I'll kneel and lick your feet. But if you're the VIP, you'll have to wear a collar and pee in front of me."

"Pervert! You disgusting dog! Who would ever bet on something like that!" Kushida shot back without hesitation.

"I can customize a collar you'd like" Kaoru Mitoma added thoughtfully.

"I can't believe it. Do you really enjoy licking girls' feet that much?" Kushida was momentarily speechless, but her breathing grew increasingly rapid.

"And on top of that, why would you want to watch... watch a girl pee? What's next? Drinking it? You're definitely a pervert!"

"Not to that extent. Just think about it—these methods might be used on Horikita later. Shouldn't we try them out first to see how effective they are?" Kaoru Mitoma voice was soft and persuasive, not forcing her at all.

Kushida fell silent for a moment.

"I'm not betting. You must have figured something out."

She wasn't the smartest, but that didn't mean she was an idiot.

If Kaoru Mitoma wasn't confident, why would he dare to make such a bet with her?

After hanging up, Kaoru Mitoma freshened up a bit and then headed out alone.

It was another beautiful day.

The soft sunlight shimmered on the deck and the sea breeze was cool and refreshing.

Most of the students seemed to be gathered in the ship's dining area, so the café was relatively empty.

Kaoru Mitoma ordered a coffee and some pastries at the counter.

Shortly after sitting down, his attention naturally drifted to a secluded corner.

Although the person quickly averted their gaze, there was no doubt—it was Ayanokoji Kiyotaka.

Was he waiting for someone?

The thought had barely crossed his mind when someone else walked into the café.

The newcomer's eyes scanned the room and the moment they landed on Kaoru Mitoma, they visibly stiffened, their brow furrowing.

"What are you doing here?"

As the cold voice rang out, Kaoru Mitoma also took a moment to study the person before him—Horikita Suzune.

[Activating "Emotion Perception" ...]

[Horikita Suzune: Calm, Resistant, Suspicious, Insecure, Flustered...]

[Suggestions: Maintain eye contact, offer gentle reassurance and touch the chest to reduce the target's resistance.]

Did she really experience so many emotions in such a short time?

Looking at Horikita Suzune's expressionless face, Kaoru Mitoma met her gaze directly.

"Same as you. Someone wanted to discuss the exam with me."

Facing his gaze, she felt as though she was completely exposed before him.

His slightly provocative words made Horikita Suzune feel somewhat stifled and she couldn't help but avert her eyes.

"So, you weren't deliberately waiting for me here?" Horikita Suzune said expressionlessly.

"If I manage to earn 500,000 personal points in this exam, your plan will be ruined."

To be honest, she was starting to regret it now.

Why had she taken the initiative to propose a new contract back then?

If she had just waited another day or two, the school would have held this special exam and as long as she achieved Outcome One or Outcome Three, her debt with Kaoru Mitoma would have been wiped clean.

If she had been the VIP Student, she would have had even more leeway and wouldn't have needed to panic at all.

"No, Suzune, I'm determined to have you" Kaoru Mitoma winked at her.

The next second, both of their phones vibrated slightly.

Horikita Suzune took a deep breath, then pulled out her phone.

The school's notification was prominently displayed on the screen.

[After our rigorous adjustments, you have not been selected as the VIP. Please proceed with the awareness of being a group member and take on the challenge of the exam. The exam will begin at 1 PM today and will last for three days. Members of the Dragon Group, please assemble in the Dragon Group room on the second floor.]

She wasn't the VIP.

Although she felt a bit resentful, Horikita Suzune could only think of the corresponding strategies and quickly identify the VIP Student within her group in the upcoming time.

"Judging by your expression, neither of us is the VIP Student," Kaoru Mitoma glanced at the message on his phone, a faint smile appearing at the corner of his mouth.

Horikita Suzune retorted stubbornly.

"Sorry, you can guess whatever you want. I have an appointment and can't keep you company any longer."

With that, she walked off towards the corner on her own.

"Struggling further is meaningless. Ayanokouji-kun isn't the VIP Student either, so the outcome you're hoping for won't happen" Kaoru Mitoma said softly behind her.

Horikita Suzune paused for a moment, then continued walking forward.

Though she seemed indifferent, her thoughts were already in disarray.

[Horikita Suzune: Insecure, defensive, suspicious, anxious...]

[It is recommended to gently comfort the target, hold hands and caress the chest to lower the target's defensive mentality.]

Horikita Suzune's emotions had shifted, though it was unclear whether it was due to his words or the earlier eye contact.

This skill felt somewhat useless to him.

Kaoru Mitoma put away his phone, he already knew the answer to the exam.

As he had just said, if he wanted to, Horikita Suzune's expectations would be shattered once again.

Chapter 174: The Relationship Is Getting More Complicated

"You seem to have a good relationship with Mitoma."

Horikita Suzune looked expressionlessly at Ayanokouji Kiyotaka.

Was he blind?

"The school should have sent you a notification, right? Are you the VIP Student?"

"No," Ayanokouji Kiyotaka obediently took out his phone and showed it to her, then slowly added.

"Won't Mitoma get angry if you're with me?"

In an instant, Horikita Suzune shot him a sharp glare, causing him to immediately shut his mouth.

"Sometimes, you really talk too much."

"But you two seem like..."

"I have nothing to do with him," Horikita Suzune coldly stared at him.

"Besides, even if I did have something with him, it's none of your business, right?"

Ayanokouji Kiyotaka fell silent for a moment, then sighed.

"It's just that Sudou seems to like you. If you had a boyfriend, I'd have to advise him to give up."

Horikita Suzune was taken aback.

Sudou Ken liked her?

"Please make him give up quickly. If you can't do it, I'll step in and reject him myself."

Without a hint of hesitation, Horikita Suzune was even ready to act immediately, personally confronting Sudou Ken to shatter his unrealistic fantasies.

The thought of him liking her filled Horikita Suzune with a sense of disgust, making her feel utterly uncomfortable.

This feeling was probably the aversion a top student felt toward a sports-oriented student.

She had never imagined having any connection with Sudou Ken.

"It's not that exaggerated. Sudou has his strengths. Although he's not as good as Mitoma, he's quite athletic, and he even said he'd always listen to his wife in the future."

As he spoke, Ayanokouji Kiyotaka noticed Horikita Suzune staring intently at him.

"It's rare to see someone like you speak up for others."

"Well, he's a friend. That's what friends do."

"Hmm, why emphasize Mitoma-kun?" Horikita Suzune said softly.

"Are you curious about him?"

Ayanokouji Kiyotaka replied. "Because he and Katsuragi from Class A were the core of the deserted island exam. I think Class A's excellent performance is closely tied to him."

"I can understand your thoughts, but I can tell you that everything about him has nothing to do with you. Please don't dig deeper." A cold glint flashed in Horikita Suzune's eyes.

Ayanokouji Kiyotaka immediately surrendered, seemingly helpless.

"Alright, alright. I won't be curious about your affairs anymore."

Seeing this, Horikita Suzune steered the conversation back on track.

"In this exam, the VIP Students hold a significant advantage. If we can't identify them in time, I'm afraid this exam will end without any results."

"Yeah, the VIP Students' advantage is huge."

"About these VIP Students, I'm really curious about what this 'strict adjustment' means. Could it be that they're not randomly selected by the school?"

"Judging from the grouping, there seems to be some pattern. For example, most of the students in your Dragon Group are top performers, right?"

"Are you talking about exam results?" Horikita Suzune pondered for a moment.

"That makes sense, but it's probably not the case. Otherwise, Yukimura-kun and Kouenji-kun would also be in the Dragon Group, not Kushida-san."

Ayanokouji Kiyotaka glanced at Kaoru Mitoma, who was not far away, and said.

"If there's a chance, I'd like to see the lists of other groups."

Just looking at our own group makes it hard to uncover the truth.

We need more samples.

Horikita Suzune understood this as well, but she replied.

"I hope you'll at least put in the effort to achieve a decent result."

Ayanokouji Kiyotaka scratched his head, puzzled.

"I'm just an ordinary student. I can't do that, can I?"

However, Horikita Suzune wasn't buying it.

"Why did you follow me at the last moment on the deserted island?"

"Because I was worried something might happen to you."

"No, you're more proactive than usual, and you even dragged me out to scout the situation at the beginning." Horikita Suzune's gaze was sharp as she stared at him.

"During our conversation, you kept sneaking glances at Mitoma-kun. You're hiding something from me aren't you, Ayanokouji-kun?"

'This woman's instinct is incredibly sharp' Ayanokouji Kiyotaka thought with a hint of surprise.

Before he could respond, Horikita Suzune turned her gaze away and said indifferently.

"Never mind, I'm not interested in your affairs. Although I don't know why you've suddenly become so proactive, you definitely can't win against Mitoma-kun."

He can't win against Kaoru Mitoma?

Hearing this, Ayanokouji Kiyotaka felt an extremely rare emotional fluctuation within him, or perhaps it was the impulse to prove himself after hearing something ridiculous.

Noticing his silence, Horikita Suzune took a sip of her coffee.

Could this be considered a successful provocation?

At that moment, the wind chime at the café door rang again, producing a clear and pleasant sound.

A petite girl with a cane walked slowly into the café, followed by a slightly taller girl.

Horikita Suzune was slightly taken aback.

She didn't recall seeing them on the uninhabited island.

"Hehe, you actually arrived early. It seems Mitoma-kun has accepted my conditioning quite well."

The girl's voice was like a clear flowing stream, but her words left Horikita Suzune stunned.

Not only that, but Kaoru Mitoma's reaction was even more jaw-dropping.

"Good morning, Master."

Like a loyal servant, Kaoru Mitoma stood up and considerately pulled out a chair for her.

Faced with this scene, not only did Horikita Suzune look astonished, but the girl behind her was completely shocked.

"W-Wait, what are you saying? Is that title for real!?"

Kamuro Masumi couldn't help but shout and this was also the question Horikita Suzune wanted answered.

"Hehe, don't get too worked up, Kamuro-san." Sakayanagi Arisu smiled slightly.

"Right now, Mitoma-kun is undoubtedly a pervert. I've come to accept that wholeheartedly."

"I know that, but what exactly have you been hiding from me?" Kamuro Masumi felt utterly confused.

She and Kushida Kikyou were Kaoru Mitoma's pets, and Kaoru Mitoma was Sakayanagi Arisu's pet.

What kind of relationship was this?

"Right now, it's just to let her have her fun. Another day, it'll be her turn to call me Master" Kaoru Mitoma said without any sense of shame.

After all, it was just a title.

"Just letting me have my fun?" Sakayanagi Arisu looked genuinely hurt.

"Even though you did such terrible things to me back then, no matter how much I cried for help, you still pinned me down on the table, forcefully took off my clothes, and then had skin-to-skin contact with me..."

Before she could finish, Kaoru Mitoma reached out and pinched her cheek, preventing her from speaking further.

"I thought you wouldn't be able to handle it, but it turns out you're just as much of a pervert as Kamuro-san."

"Ugh..." Sakayanagi Arisu couldn't speak, only blinking her eyes.

Meanwhile, Kamuro Masumi was visibly displeased.

Since when was she a pervert!?

Chapter 175: What Are You So Excited About?

"Is she Sakayanagi-san from Class A?"

"Such a cute little loli, and with a sickly persona too. I can't... I can't hold it in anymore!" "What's so special about her? She's nothing but cute, and the leader of Class A should be our big brother Katsuragi!"

"She doesn't have much to boast about either. She's probably trying to win over Mitoma now."

"By the way, whose side is Mitoma really on?"

"Wait, master!?"

Ever since Sakayanagi Arisu appeared in the café, there had been occasional whispers around.

She sat opposite, wearing a beret, her smooth white hair cascading down to her shoulders. The gentle curves of her chest resembled the soft undulations of a cape by the sea. She held a cane with both hands, resting it on the outer side of her thighs. The hem of her short skirt was tucked under her round, perky buttocks. White garter stockings followed the slender curves of her legs, disappearing into black Mary Jane shoes. A glimpse of her delicate, warm heel could be seen, tempting one to imagine her lifting her leg and stepping on them with her jade-like feet.

Seemingly indifferent to the surrounding gazes, she maintained a faint smile under Kaoru Mitoma's scrutiny. Her slightly youthful face gradually took on a fox-like charm, as if she could easily deceive anyone with just a moment of inattention.

Though she looked adorable, Kaoru Mitoma knew she could also hit hard. Just moments ago, when he tugged at her, his calf was immediately struck.

"Did you also lick her feet?" Kamuro Masumi, sitting beside Kaoru Mitoma, asked in a low voice, her tone carrying a faint, pleasant fragrance, reminiscent of jasmine.

"In your eyes, is that all I can do?" Kaoru Mitoma glanced at the girl beside him. Her long legs were tightly pressed together, the smooth, fair skin of her thighs somewhat dazzling, evoking an urge to touch them.

"Being able to call her 'master' in front of everyone, I don't think you have the right to question me," Kamuro Masumi felt a bit annoyed. She had hoped you would teach Sakayanagi Arisu a lesson, but it seems you've already been tamed by her in private.

Does this guy really do anything as long as he gets to lick her feet?

"This is a reward for his obedience, Masumi. If you're jealous, you can step on this man now and make him kneel to lick your feet," Sakayanagi Arisu interjected.

"Who would do such a thing?" Kamuro Masumi's face turned slightly red. "Besides, this is just a game between the two of you. It's better not to involve me; I have no interest in it."

[Kamuro Masumi: Flustered, conflicted, dissatisfied...]

[Suggestions: Licking jade feet, holding hands, caressing thighs, head, and chest can increase the target's affection.]

The prompt seemed to have changed. Kaoru Mitoma thought for a moment, then suddenly took Kamuro Masumi's small hand in his.

Clearly, Kamuro Masumi's entire body stiffened.

After a while, she began to react, slightly struggling in Kaoru Mitoma's grip, while also lowering her voice, "What are you doing?"

Since both their hands were under the table, Sakayanagi Arisu didn't see their actions, only sensing that Kamuro Masumi's expression seemed unnatural.

"Don't move. I'm thinking about what to ask of you," Kaoru Mitoma squeezed the girl's hand. Sometimes, he wondered why girls were so soft all over, making them particularly fun to play with?

"You'd better hurry up," Kamuro Masumi stared intently at the coffee on the table, though she seemed to relax a bit. "I thought holding hands with a boy would be something special, but it's just like this."

What do you mean, 'just like this'? If it weren't for the fact that he could feel her palm sweating, he might have believed her.[Kamuro Masumi: Satisfaction, surprise, tension...]

[Suggestions: Licking her feet, holding hands, caressing her thighs, head, and chest can continuously increase the target's affection.]

Could this suggestion really be effective?

Kaoru Mitoma was about to continue, but Arisu Sakayanagi suddenly sighed.

"Although I don't mind you two being intimate, could you at least glance at me?"

In an instant, a flash of panic and embarrassment crossed Kamuro Masumi's eyes.

"Hey, hey, hey, don't lump me in with you two perverts!"

"Huh? Masumi-san, weren't you rewarding him?" Arisu Sakayanagi showed a puzzled expression. "I feel like if Mitoma-kun just asked you, you'd agree immediately."

"How could I be such an easy woman!" Kamuro Masumi glared back fiercely. "It's just that being with you two, the things that have happened in the past few months are equivalent to what I've experienced in over a decade!"

Not only was she suddenly asked to look down, but she also witnessed someone blushing and exposing themselves. Kamuro Masumi felt she was doing quite well to remain calm.

"Hehe, let's put the rewards aside for now. We have serious matters to discuss today." Arisu Sakayanagi looked at Kaoru Mitoma with interest, her cherry lips parting slightly. "Mi~to~ma~kun, are you the Privileged Student?"

"No." Kaoru Mitoma played with Kamuro Masumi's small hand, sensing her tension.

"Such a straightforward answer. In that case, do you know who the Privileged Student is?" Arisu Sakayanagi pouted slightly, her gaze flickering to a spot not far away where someone was peeking at them.

"Even if you ask, I can't tell you." Kaoru Mitoma shook his head. "Right now, it's you who should be worried about the exam. If you don't perform soon, someone might betray you."

Arisu Sakayanagi narrowed her eyes and sighed. "So Katsuragi-kun has indeed become your man, hasn't he?"

"There's no such thing as someone being someone else's man. They just want to follow the strong to ensure their interests aren't harmed."

This isn't the Warring States period, and Arisu Sakayanagi isn't some feudal lord. No samurai would pledge their undying loyalty to her.

If someone stronger and more suited to lead the class emerges, even if her subordinates don't all betray her, once the neutral faction leans toward Kaoru Mitoma, she'll become the minority in the class.

The minority follows the majority, and Arisu Sakayanagi would have to stay behind and follow orders.

This was Kaoru Mitoma's initial plan—no need for a showdown, just be better at meeting the class's interests than her.

"Although I don't know what you're trying to do in this special exam, I think the exam can end now." Kaoru Mitoma said. "From now on, after each group discussion, one group will finish the exam. You can try to stop it as much as you like."

As soon as he finished speaking, Kamuro Masumi looked at him in disbelief. Hadn't the exam just started?

Why was it suddenly over?

Wait, does that mean this guy already knew the answer to the exam right from the start?

Isn't that too exaggerated?

Kamuro Masumi couldn't help but glance at Arisu Sakayanagi across from her. The latter's body seemed to tremble slightly, her pretty face glowing with a dangerous light, even tinged with a flush of excitement.

No way, he just threatened you like that, and you're getting excited?

Chapter 176: You're Being Quite Rude

To be honest, Arisu Sakayanagi only felt her heart slightly beating, accompanied by a faint stinging sensation.

A subtle electric current coursed through her body, leaving her feeling both numb and itchy.

It was difficult to control this instinctive physiological reaction.

No, rather, the more Kaoru Mitoma treated her this way, the more excited she became.

"Hehehe, on the first day of the exam... no, did you already know the answer yesterday?" Arisu Sakayanagi smiled as she gazed at the man before her.

"You're ahead of me and that's really quite displeasing."

Kaoru Mitoma shook his head "Even if you understood the rules faster than I did, it would still be meaningless."

Because Arisu Sakayanagi didn't care about Class A's victory or defeat.

She was only concerned with whether the exam could bring her enjoyment.

Because of this, she wouldn't end the exam prematurely.

However, Kaoru Mitoma was different from her.

"You were able to deduce the exam's answer just by understanding the rules. No wonder you could uncover the school's truth on your first day here." Arisu Sakayanagi recalled the scene, pressing her fingers against her chest, feeling the palpitations.

"Fortunately, Kamuro-san told me those things, otherwise Class A would have been too boring."

Noticing Kaoru Mitoma's gaze, Masumi Kamuro pursed her lips.

"She kept asking about you, so I had no choice but to tell her everything."

Kaoru Mitoma reached out and placed his hand on her thigh.

The smooth texture was irresistible, the tender skin soft and elastic, somewhat alluring.

Although it wasn't the first time he had touched her thigh, Masumi Kamuro still felt a hint of embarrassment and annoyance.

At the same time, an unusual sensation spread throughout her body from his slightly rough palm.

Especially when he tried to go further, Masumi Kamuro tightly pressed down on his hand.

A girl's skirt wasn't something that could be so easily breached.

"I was planning to make another bet with you, but it seems I misjudged the situation." Arisu Sakayanagi felt regretful.

Since the other party was faster than her, this summer trip seemed to be a bit boring.

"Aren't you going to struggle a bit more?"

As he spoke, Kaoru Mitoma was also testing Masumi Kamuro's limits.

The smooth, delicate bare leg felt cooler than stockings and through the skin, he could sense her tension.

Due to Masumi Kamuro's defense, he didn't go further up but instead slowly caressed her thigh.

This gentle rubbing wouldn't make her feel overly tense, yet it would intermittently tease her sensitive nerves.

The faint stimulation brought a tingling sensation, accompanied by a subtle sense of restlessness.

She wanted him to let go, yet she also wanted him to increase the pressure.

Humans, like monkeys, are social animals.

Whether in a troop of monkeys or among humans, acts of touching are often observed.

From a psychological perspective, this is an intimate gesture that can increase mutual affection and is also an expression of deep emotional connection.

Clearly, Masumi Kamuro wasn't very knowledgeable about this.

She only felt that it was somewhat unbearable.

What surprised her even more was that she hadn't pushed away this lecherous scoundrel.

Masumi Kamuro pursed her lips tightly, telling herself in her heart that this was merely fulfilling his request and wouldn't go any further.

But how on earth did Arisu Sakayanagi put up with this guy?

Kamuro Masumi secretly glanced at her delicate feet, unable to imagine the scene of him licking them.

It was too embarrassing.

"Sorry to disappoint you, but I won't show any signs of desperation" Arisu Sakayanagi reflected on herself.

"I'm starting to regret it. I shouldn't have let you run wild on the island... No, even Hashimoto-kun probably couldn't stop you. Does it have to be me who steps in?"

Since Kaoru Mitoma already knew the answer, this exam was essentially over.

No matter how much she struggled, she couldn't escape Kaoru Mitoma's grasp.

As Kaoru Mitoma had just said, he could now end the exams for all nine groups early or take his time, ending one group's exam after each discussion.

No, she still had one way out.

Help the other classes and stage a grand betrayal against Kaoru Mitoma and Class A.

If she could make Kaoru Mitoma fail a few exams in a row, most of Class A's students would turn back to her.

However, this approach also carried risks.

If Kaoru Mitoma caught wind of it, it would be difficult for her to maintain her footing in the class.

"Thinking of allying with the other classes?" Kaoru Mitoma suddenly said.

Arisu Sakayanagi blinked, a teasing smile playing on her lips as she whispered.

"Rather than being Mitoma-kun's maid, I'd much prefer having Mitoma-kun as my servant. After all, a cute and delicate girl like me is easily broken."

Kaoru Mitoma shrugged it off.

"Actually, you've already lost since you boarded the ship. Even if you tell the other classes the answer now, Class A won't lose much."

Suppose Arisu Sakayanagi shared the answer with the other classes today, allowing them to share the losses.

For example, by attacking each other, making concessions and ending the exam early, they could avoid Class A being completely wiped out and even split Class A's points.

But such a move would only minimize losses, not gain any real benefits.

Unless Arisu Sakayanagi only told one class, allowing them to end the exam early.

However, that would bring things back to square one.

Class A wouldn't see Arisu Sakayanagi's strength, nor would they witness Katsuragi Kohei or Kaoru Mitoma's failure.

This special exam had a unique mechanism, no longer relying on teamwork but on individual thinking.

At most, they would attribute it to the strength of their group members, who managed to identify the VIP.

This was a deliberate mental trap set by the school, focusing everyone's attention on their group members and discussions while ignoring factors outside the group.

"Though it's frustrating, let's call this exam a draw for now," Arisu Sakayanagi said after a moment of silence, then smiled.

"But I won't give up. On the contrary, please look forward to my turn next semester."

By this point, Masumi Kamuro couldn't help but fidget with her legs, her breathing growing erratic.

"I'm tired of hearing that. Maybe you should compete with some genius instead" Kaoru Mitoma couldn't help but glance downward, only to have his soft waist pinched by her.

"Hehe, let's not talk about him. I'm more interested in you right now, Mitoma-kun~" Arisu Sakayanagi extended her cane and poked his calf a few times.

"It's about time to stop. Although I don't mind the game you're playing with Kamuro-san, it's quite rude to make another girl blush in front of one."

Before Kaoru Mitoma could respond, Masumi Kamuro suddenly trembled, her pretty face flushing red as she stammered.

"I-I'm not blushing! It's just because of your bet. I'm only fulfilling his request!"

After hearing this, Kaoru Mitoma's expression turned strange.

When had he ever said this was a request for her?

Chapter 177: If She's Uncomfortable, She'll Leave on Her Own

In Masumi Kamuro's eyes, was everything he had just done to her merely part of fulfilling the bet?

Although her touch was pleasant, this wasn't acceptable.

It wouldn't help achieve his wish.

"Can we go further?" Kaoru Mitoma caressed the girl's thigh, stopping just below the hem of her skirt.

The tender depths of her thigh seemed to hold an infinite allure, drawing all gazes.

"Don't even think about it. Try moving again and see what happens?" Kamuro Masumi warned him.

How could she let him act so recklessly in such a place?

Wouldn't that make her seem like a shameless woman?

Kaoru Mitoma ignored her warning and his hand accidentally slipped to the inner part of her thigh.

Before he could fully appreciate the softness, her instinctive reaction clamped down on it.

"I'll give you three seconds," Masumi Kamuro bit her lip.

She knew her face must be completely red by now, but she also knew she couldn't let Kaoru Mitoma have his way without any limits.

Seeing this, Kaoru Mitoma gently withdrew his hand from between her legs and instead took hold of her small hand.

Masumi Kamuro didn't resist at all.

Compared to letting him go further under her skirt, it was better to quietly let him hold her hand.

Seeing this, Arisu Sakayanagi smiled for some reason.

"You really are a pervert, Mitoma-kun."

"Stop repeating that."

"Hehe, then let me add a little more. You're a very interesting pervert."

Hearing this, Masumi Kamuro pursed her lips.

Actually, both of you are perverts.

"Please don't misunderstand, Kamuro-san. I think the most indecent person here is actually you," Arisu Sakayanagi seemed to see through her thoughts.

"Even though you know Mitoma-kun will do something outrageous to you, you still choose to sit next to him. It gives off a strange vibe of playing hard to get."

In an instant, Masumi Kamuro's face turned crimson as she retorted.

"If I'm a pervert, then so are you! Sneaking around to reward him without anyone knowing. I was wondering why you were holding your chest when you returned to your room. He licked you, didn't he?"

Arisu Sakayanagi blinked, feeling the urge to say that if you're uncomfortable, you can leave right away.

However, if she were to say that, it would only provoke Masumi Kamuro further.

Well, perhaps "provoke" isn't the right word.

Masumi Kamuro's personality is inherently awkward.

Even if she feels comfortable, she would never admit it.

"Although I had some mental preparation, I'm still a bit surprised that it actually happened to me. I didn't expect Kamuro-san to tolerate him for so long."

As she spoke, Arisu Sakayanagi seemed to be reminiscing about something.

Her fingers gently pressed against her slightly raised chest and she shyly lowered her head, exuding an innocent and naive demeanor.

Masumi Kamuro pursed her lips, already accustomed to her act.

In truth, she and Kaoru Mitoma were a match made in heaven—both equally perverse.

"Hey, how long are you going to keep holding on?"

Masumi Kamuro felt that the reward had gone on long enough.

If it continued, people might start misunderstanding the nature of their relationship.

Kaoru Mitoma didn't let go immediately.

Instead, his gaze fixated on her calves.

Masumi Kamuro looked at him in confusion but quickly realized that his gaze wasn't just focused on her thighs—he was also eyeing her feet.

Many high school girls wore small leather shoes and Masumi Kamuro was no exception.

Today, she only wore thin ankle socks, as she wasn't used to wearing knee-high socks, which often slid down.

Although she usually took care of her feet, by the end of the day, the smell of sweat mixed with the leather shoes was hard to completely eliminate.

This was a normal physiological reaction and it was impossible for anyone to be completely odorless.

For this reason, Masumi Kamuro had always been self-conscious about it.

"No way!"

She didn't hesitate for a moment, firmly rejecting Kaoru Mitoma.

"Can't you indulge me just a little more?" Kaoru Mitoma was already beyond caring.

If he was a foot fetishist, then so be it.

"I don't have a fetish for letting men lick my feet. If you like it, why don't you find someone who can satisfy you?" Masumi Kamuro knew there were people who could cater to Kaoru Mitoma's desires, and it bothered her a bit.

After all, this man had probably kissed the feet of countless girls.

"Wasn't it okay before?" Kaoru Mitoma refused to give up, bringing up the time when Masumi Kamuro had once wanted to reward him.

"Was it?" Masumi Kamuro played dumb.

That was then, and this is now.

Back then, she had only wanted to disgust Kaoru Mitoma and wish him an early happy birthday.

If she were to do it again now, she definitely wouldn't.

It was too embarrassing.

She wasn't like Arisu Sakayanagi, a perverted loli who could let men lick her feet without any psychological burden.

"Haha, you should ask her in private," Arisu Sakayanagi chuckled.

"She's very conscious of my presence here now, and she's also upset about what you did to me."

"Don't talk nonsense!" Masumi Kamuro was furious.

Part of the reason she disliked Arisu Sakayanagi was precisely this—the other girl always seemed to see right through her thoughts.

"I should be going now. You two can stay here and flirt if you want," Arisu Sakayanagi stood up, her competitive spirit thoroughly roused by Kaoru Mitoma.

It was unbelievable that she had fallen behind this guy.

"Wait, who's flirting here!" Masumi Kamuro quickly denied, gently freeing herself from Kaoru Mitoma's grasp and trying to catch up with Arisu Sakayanagi.

Kaoru Mitoma thought for a moment; he also had some matters to attend to.

Just as he stood up, he saw Arisu Sakayanagi suddenly turn back, leaning on her cane, looking up at him.

For some reason, she suddenly smiled.

"Mitoma-kun, please come a bit closer."

Although he didn't understand what Arisu Sakayanagi was thinking, Kaoru Mitoma complied, taking a small step forward.

Then, she seemed to let go of her cane and the girl suddenly stumbled, her body falling forward like a collapsing mountain into Kaoru Mitoma's arms.

Kaoru Mitoma instinctively caught her, but she grabbed his collar in return.

Her pretty face was close, her eyes like burning flames, her wine-red lips slightly parted, bringing a tingling sensation that invaded his chest and neck.

"I've changed my mind; you're no longer just an appetizer" her voice was sweet like spring water.

"Compared to him, I indeed enjoy the feeling you bring more."

"You didn't have to throw yourself at me like that," Kaoru Mitoma could feel the surrounding gazes.

Their previous conversation might have gone unheard, but people weren't blind.

Arisu Sakayanagi laughed, her eyes curving mischievously as she replied.

"This is to leave my exclusive mark on Mitoma-kun, so no pests disturb us."

Kaoru Mitoma was at a loss for words.

The girl's body was soft and pleasant to hold, seemingly slender yet slightly plump, very comfortable in his arms.

Lowering his head slightly, he could even catch a whiff of her unique milky fragrance.

"Enough, enough, you two shameless people, let go already" Masumi Kamuro couldn't stand it anymore, pulling at Arisu Sakayanagi with impatience.

"Hehe, would you like to have a hug too, Kamuro-san? His shoulders are so broad, his chest and back so firm. So this is what a boy's embrace feels like~"

"You're the most perverted one here, clearly!"

Chapter 178: Mitoma's Unyielding Spirit

This collar-grabbing posture reminded Kaoru Mitoma of his experiences from the previous world.

Toru Asakura had done something similar, though she was just straightening his tie.

His emotions slightly stirred, his thoughts returning to reality.

The girl's subtle fragrance teased his adolescent body.

Before he could act, Arisu Sakayanagi lowered her voice again.

"Strange, facing a girl who throws herself into your arms, Mitoma-kun heartbeat is quite steady."

"Probably because someone has done this before" Kaoru Mitoma didn't shy away.

Even though it was long ago, facts were facts and he couldn't forget every idol.

"Suddenly, I feel a bit unwilling, but never mind" Arisu Sakayanagi left his embrace, smiling slightly.

"I'm not interested in your past, after all, I know the you of now."

Actually, Kaoru Mitoma didn't care about her past either.

Whether from the recent conversation or previous talks, it was clear that Arisu Sakayanagi had once met Kiyotaka Ayanokouji and there was some relationship between them.

However, upon closer observation of Kiyotaka Ayanokouji's reaction, it seemed that he had no feelings towards Arisu Sakayanagi.

Was it just that Arisu Sakayanagi knew Kiyotaka Ayanokouji?

Moreover, what did "masterpiece" mean?

Kaoru Mitoma was somewhat concerned about the desires surrounding Kiyotaka Ayanokouji, which, unlike others, leaned more towards toying with him.

For example, making Kiyotaka Ayanokouji drop out or forcing him to wear women's clothing.

"Alright, stop being jealous, Kamuro-san."

"I'm not jealous!"

"Don't you want to stay by his side?"

"You talk too much."

As their voices gradually faded away, Kaoru Mitoma was about to take out his phone when another figure appeared before him.

"What was that all about?" Suzune Horikita straightforwardly expressed her confusion.

"The arrogant you in front of me is actually just someone else's pet? If it's a joke, then it's a bit over the top."

This direct and uncompromising questioning style was typical of her, making one wonder if she usually couldn't read the room.

Probably no one would pay her any mind, especially with her high-and-mighty attitude.

"This matter shouldn't concern you, right?" Kaoru Mitoma looked at her, puzzled.

Suzune Horikita coldly replied "It does concern me. I don't want to see my opponent as someone else's dog, it would lower my status."

"Your pride is something else, but you're not yet qualified to be my opponent," Kaoru Mitoma said.

"Is that Ayanokouji-kun over there your helper?"

Suzune Horikita slightly averted her gaze but continued.

"There's no rule that says I can't do that, is there?"

"Of course not, go ahead. But our previous agreement still stands. If you're pinning your hopes on this exam, I suggest you prepare now."

His words made Suzune Horikita frown and she couldn't help but feel a bit irritated, her tone tinged with displeasure.

"Before the exam results are out, whatever you say is meaningless chatter. Or are you annoyed because you think I'm going to break through your trap?"

Kaoru Mitoma fell silent.

It seemed she still didn't understand her current predicament.

However, this couldn't be blamed on Suzune Horikita, as it was hard to imagine that the exam's answer would be so simple.

Her thoughts were clearly still focused on her group members.

Today, she had specifically called out Kiyotaka Ayanokouji, probably to understand the other group.

Being able to do this showed that Suzune Horikita had some awareness, far surpassing most people.

But this still wasn't enough.

Without a doubt, Arisu Sakayanagi would soon know the answer and perhaps even more people would find out.

Suzune Horikita's personality was prone to getting stuck in a rut.

If she were misled during this period, she might never think of the answer.

"You go ahead and work hard with Ayanokouji-kun. I have some other matters to attend to" Kaoru Mitoma said, taking out his phone to contact Kanzaki Ryuuji and also informing Honami Ichinose about the recent events.

Although the two of them were in a fake relationship, it was still necessary to report to avoid any future reckoning from his little girlfriend.

Suzune Horikita pursed her lips, her stubbornness flaring up again.

Since he looked down on her, she would prove herself and see who would be the star then!

Besides, if you can be someone else's dog now, why can't you be my dog?

Having thought this far, Horikita Suzune made up her mind.

She would find the VIP of the Dragon Group within the next few days, and she would do it relying solely on her own abilities!

"The VIP of the Rat Group is Ishida, the VIP of the Ox Group is Kobashi from Class B, the VIP of the Tiger Group is Kaneda from Class C, the VIP of the Rabbit Group is Karuizawa from Class D and the VIP of the Dragon Group is..."

Listening to Kaoru Mitoma read out the VIPs from each list, Katsuragi Kohei felt somewhat at a loss.

What exactly was going on?

Could they really end the competition right after it had just begun?

Wasn't that a bit too exaggerated?

For some reason, Katsuragi Kohei's mood became quite complicated.

This dream-like feeling was too strange.

Was this what it felt like to be carried by someone else?

"Ahem, I'm not doubting you, but how can we be sure these names are correct?" Katsuragi Kohei didn't blindly trust Kaoru Mitoma, as Class A could suffer heavy losses if things went wrong.

"Did Ishida tell you about his identity?" Kaoru Mitoma countered.

The Ishida he mentioned was also a member of the Katsuragi faction, so Katsuragi Kohei should be well aware of his subordinates' situations.

"The VIP of the Rat Group is Ishida," Katsuragi Kohei nodded.

"Our class has three VIPs in this exam. Besides Ishida, there's also Morishita from the Rooster Group and Rokkaku from the Boar Group," Kaoru Mitoma paused.

"Rokkaku is from Sakayanagi's faction. If we want to confirm the answer further, we can directly approach Morishita."

Katsuragi Kohei's expression turned complex and then he heard Mitoma continue.

"I know what you're thinking. The rules for the VIPs are quite simple. I'm actually a bit worried that Sakayanagi might beat us to the punch."

Sakayanagi Arisu was definitely no fool.

She just lacked a bit of motivation, but she would probably deduce the answer soon enough.

Soon, Kaoru Mitoma explained the rules of the VIPs to Katsuragi Kohei, then pondered for a moment.

"After the first group discussion, if no group has ended the exam, then we'll proceed with the exam at our own pace. You can also share this information with those you trust."

If Sakayanagi Arisu wanted to compete with him, there was nothing he could do.

After all, he wasn't the leader of the uninhabited island and he couldn't change the VIPs now.

Of course, Kaoru Mitoma also had a unique solution.

That was to inform the entire class about the VIPs in advance, thereby claiming all the credit for himself.

However, this approach also carried some risks.

For example, he had to prevent someone like Totsuka Yahiko from accidentally leaking the information.

Chapter 179: The First Group Discussion

After some discussion, Kaoru Mitoma and Kohei Katsuragi finalized a plan.

No matter what Arisu Sakayanagi did, they would wait until the first group discussion ended, then inform the entire class about the VIPs and send the answer messages in the evening, thereby ending the exams for two of the groups.

Faced with collective benefits, the students of Class A understood that this would also be advantageous for them and wouldn't leak the information.

The only flaw was Arisu Sakayanagi, who might directly sell the information to other classes.

However, whether they informed the entire class or kept the information hidden, the difference wasn't significant, as Arisu Sakayanagi would eventually deduce the answer anyway.

The reason for proceeding slowly with the exam was that ending nine groups' exams all at once would be too exaggerated and could easily alert the other classes.

Due to the lack of overt and covert struggles in group discussions, many people's attention would likely shift to the exam rules, deduce the answers and thereby threaten the privileges of Class A.

Of course, even if it came to that, Class A would only lose a bit of profit.

Therefore, the other reason is simple.

Even if victory is assured, at least give others some time to struggle, even if it seems like going easy on them.

Just by looking at Horikita Suzune's expression, Kaoru Mitoma could guess what she was thinking.

Let her struggle a bit more so she can gradually come to terms with reality.

"First, for the Tiger and Monkey groups, have Sanada and Morimiya send the answer messages tonight. Ending the exams for two groups in one day won't raise any suspicions."

The exam duration is three days and it will officially end on the evening of the third day.

Therefore, Kaoru Mitoma and Kohei Katsuragi only need to quietly eliminate four groups.

The remaining five groups can send their answer messages later.

"Honestly, why don't you take the lead for everyone?" Katsuragi Kohei sighed deeply.

"No, I don't have the time for that. Management requires effort," Kaoru Mitoma smiled.

According to his initial plan, he should broadcast the day's answers to the entire class daily and end all exams on the final day for the best effect.

Unfortunately, Sakayanagi Arisu would definitely disrupt his plan, so he had to inform the entire class of the information.

"But what about the personal points for the correct answerers?" Kohei Katsuragi raised a crucial question.

In the case of a correct answer, besides increasing the class points by 50, the correct answerer would also receive 500,000 personal points.

"Let the students in the same group share it equally. Each person would get about 100,000" Kaoru Mitoma added.

"Whether they are from Sakayanagi's faction or yours, everyone should be treated equally now. No bias."

After two special exams, even the most steadfast members of Sakayanagi's faction would waver, and the number of defectors would continue to increase.

There's no need to target future allies.

If Sakayanagi's faction tries to pull any tricks, then unfortunately, once caught, they would be the ones in the wrong.

Kohei Katsuragi pondered for a moment.

"I want Yahiko and the others to remain silent during the discussion to avoid revealing our information."

If you don't want to slip up, you have to seal your lips in advance.

"I have no objections, do as you see fit," said Kaoru Mitoma, unconcerned with such trivial matters.

"Sakayanagi and Ryuen are both in the Dragon Group, so keep an eye on them."

Kohei Katsuragi, who was usually very composed, couldn't help but smile slightly at this reminder.

"If I mess up knowing the answer, it would be too much of a letdown for you."

"While that's true, don't you want to verify it again?" Kaoru Mitoma thought for a moment.

"Morishita is quite approachable, and she's not aligned with Sakayanagi anymore. If we ask her, she might tell us the answer right away."

Kohei Katsuragi's expression turned strange.

In the entire Class A, you might be the only one who thinks Morishita Ai is approachable.

And, are you really trying to verify the answer?

Isn't this just an excuse to meet her?

"Mitoma, some VIP students has already told you their identity, hasn't they?" Kohei Katsuragi said quietly.

"The fact that you're so confident makes me think that's the truth. Besides, there's nothing wrong with these answers."

Kaoru Mitoma smiled: "It seems we have a tacit trust between us."

Facing his smile, Kohei Katsuragi turned his head away, feeling a bit guilty.

He had only just realized this.

"Enough said, let's prepare for the first group discussion."

Before 1 PM, Kaoru Mitoma and Masayoshi Hashimoto arrived on the second floor, where the corridor was filled with students coming to take the exam.

Gently pushing open the door to the room, they immediately drew the attention of those inside.

Kaoru Mitoma glanced around and saw everyone seated around a round table, including Miki Yamamura.

He hadn't expected her to arrive so early, so it seemed he and Hashimoto were the ones running late.

Since each class was wary of the others, the students mostly stuck together, keeping a slight distance from other classes, forming distinct cliques.

However, when Kaoru Mitoma sat next to Miki Yamamura, someone stared at him intently.

"The first round of group discussions will now begin" came the announcement over the ship's intercom, signaling the official start.

Kaoru Mitoma surveyed the surroundings and happened to meet Honami Ichinose's gaze.

She quickly turned her head away, and he noticed the tips of her ears turning slightly red.

Even now, the girl was still shy about her boldness from before.

Yuki Himeno from Class B.

Kaoru Mitoma had some impression of her, she seemed like the quiet type.

Another Class B student was Nakanishi Izumi, who appeared somewhat nervous and uncomfortable in the crowded environment.

Looking at Class C, there was a large black man named Albert Yamada and another who was clearly a delinquent, Kyogo Komiya, with dyed yellow hair.

Come to think of it, the school didn't seem to care about students dyeing their hair.

Kaoru Mitoma turned his gaze to Hiyori Shiina.

The girl's figure was slightly slender, her long hair cascading over her shoulders.

Her flawless, delicate face, with its refined nose and soft pink lips, was tightly pursed.

Her eyes were downcast, her long eyelashes trembling slightly.

She held a book by Ellery Queen in her hands, clearly immersed in the world of the novel.

Whenever he saw her, she always seemed to be quietly reading a book.

Kaoru Mitoma shifted his gaze.

The students of Class D appeared to be in a state of disarray, lacking a clear leader.

There were two boys and two girls.

One of the boys had a petite and cute appearance, almost like a young cross-dresser.

Setting aside the boys, among the two girls, he had once chatted with one of them.

Mei-yu Wang, a student from a certain Eastern country, was short in stature and carried a childlike innocence, especially with her twin ponytails.

She looked more like a little loli compared to Arisu Sakayanagi.

Moreover, her voice perfectly matched the stereotypical image of the girl next door, making one want to take her to see the goldfish.

The other girl was someone he was meeting for the first time, yet she was someone who could captivate his attention effortlessly.

Haruka Hasebe.

This was the first time Kaoru Mitoma had seen someone who could rival Honami Ichinose.

The two were evenly matched, making it hard to determine a winner in a short time.

Chapter 180: Mutual Cooperation

Even though he had seen many girls with excellent figures, Kaoru Mitoma was still somewhat surprised.

Most of the time, a slender frame wouldn't develop into a huge chest.

The so-called "fruit on a thin branch" was actually a rare case, as most girls had small chests.

Take Arisu Sakayanagi, for example.

She would probably remain flat-chested for life unless she experienced a miraculous second growth spurt.

At this tender age, Kaoru Mitoma had initially thought that Honami Ichinose would be the most dazzling girl.

However, after seeing Haruka Hasebe, he had to retract his previous assumption.

Haruka Hasebe was a slightly tall girl with smooth, long hair that had slightly curled ends.

Unlike others, she didn't have bangs, revealing her smooth forehead, giving her a somewhat carefree appearance.

Her body proportions were excellent—a slender waist, a delicate frame, yet with an overly developed chest.

She crossed her arms, seemingly trying to support the weight of her chest.

Even a high-quality shirt struggled under the pressure, making one wonder if the buttons of her uniform might pop off.

Though her chest was similar in size to Honami Ichinose's, the different shapes added a unique allure.

From the side, one could see the natural, full curves.

At this moment, Haruka Hasebe seemed to be idly observing the people around her, her phone placed beside her elbow.

It seemed she would soon lose interest.

[I can't take it anymore, quickly make her wear a maid outfit!]

[Sis, show us your inner wear!]

[Without Hasebe-san scolding, life is not worth living!]

[I want to lick Haruka Hasebe's feet!]

[Can I touch your breast?]

[Soft, fragrant, big—I want to lick it!]

[Please, you must wear a naked apron!]

[Haruka Hasebe could be my mommy!]

[Hehe, woman, you owe me a child!]

...

"Ahem, since the exam has started, should we follow the school's requirement and introduce ourselves?" Honami Ichinose suddenly broke the silence, pulling Kaoru Mitoma's attention back to her.

"Self-introduction?" Komiya from Class C seemed a bit resistant.

"There's no need for that. There are no surveillance cameras here, so no matter what we say, the school won't know."

"Even though there are no cameras, what if the school has installed recording devices?" Honami Ichinose replied calmly.

"Moreover, this is a school requirement, so I think there must be some significance to it."

Komiya instinctively glanced at Hiyori Shiina, who reluctantly closed her book and then nodded.

"I have no objections. It's better to fulfill the school's requirements as soon as possible."

With that, Honami Ichinose effortlessly won over Class C, and Class D obviously had no objections either.

Next came the self-introduction session.

Kaoru Mitoma noticed that most people were indifferent and didn't take the self-introductions seriously.

However, when it was his turn, Hiyori Shiina's eyes widened slightly.

"Eh, so Mitoma-kun is here too?" The girl's expression was somewhat excited, her eyes sparkling.

Kaoru Mitoma was taken aback.

Had she only just noticed him now?

"Ahem, after the self-introductions, we'll move on to the formal discussion. Is anyone willing to start it?" Honami Ichinose interrupted the atmosphere, her gaze somewhat unfriendly as she looked at Kaoru Mitoma.

At that moment, Masayoshi Hashimoto whispered beside him.

"Although the princess hasn't given any instructions, I guess I can only listen to you at this point, right?"

Kaoru Mitoma glanced at Miki Yamamura beside him.

From this angle, he could see the girl's collarbone as well as her slightly rounded figure.

Her small chest looked like a pudding.

"I-I'll listen to you too."

Miki Yamamura's voice was also soft, as if she was not used to being the center of attention.

Kaoru Mitoma sighed helplessly.

"Are you guys planning to dump all the thinking on me?"

Masayoshi Hashimoto chuckled, his expression saying.

"With you here, I can slack off until graduation."

Although he was still Sakayanagi faction member, his keen intuition made him sense a way out in Kaoru Mitoma, perhaps ensuring his smooth graduation from Class A.

"N-no, if you find it annoying, I can stay quiet" Miki Yamamura was a bit more serious.

Kaoru Mitoma shook his head.

"No need to be so nervous. This exam is just like that and I won't be starting it either. Let's just stay quiet."

As they spoke, Honami Ichinose stood up and looked around.

"It seems no one particularly wants to start the discussion. If no one minds, I'll take the lead in the upcoming discussion."

Unsurprisingly, no one objected.

In this group, Honami Ichinose was probably the only one with exceptional social skills.

"The premise of the discussion is that everyone should have a common topic. So, I have a question for everyone: if none of us are the 'VIP's,' wouldn't it be better to aim for Outcome One?"

Her meaning was clear: to achieve Outcome One, the entire group must trust and cooperate with each other.

At the same time, this also exposed Honami Ichinose's problem.

Kaoru Mitoma remained silent.

It seemed his little girlfriend hadn't realized it yet and had just fallen into the school's trap.

"Hmph, we don't want to cooperate. Who knows if you'll betray the VIP?" Komiya was the first to jump out in opposition, but this actually made it easier to fall into Honami Ichinose's trap.

"If we all work together, everyone can earn personal points. Even the VIP stands to gain, right?" Honami Ichinose smiled slightly.

"Could it be that Komiya-kun is the VIP?"

"O-of course not!" Komiya hurriedly denied, but his gaze kept flickering toward Hiyori Shiina.

Hiyori Shiina spoke softly "For everyone, cooperation is naturally the best outcome. But Ichinose-san, what method do you have to ensure that no one will betray us?"

This question was the most crucial point.

Aside from Outcome One, the other three outcomes were designed to pit the students against each other.

Honami Ichinose looked at Kaoru Mitoma and suddenly asked.

"What do the students from Class A think?"

Hashimoto Masayoshi had completely given up, Miki Yamamura kept her head down, so Kaoru Mitoma had to step up.

After a moment of thought, he said.

"Whatever decision everyone makes, we will respect it."

In other words, it's up to you.

Honami Ichinose was momentarily stunned, then shifted her gaze back to Hiyori Shiina and continued.

"Right now, no one knows who the VIP is. The VIP can hear our conversation. For the VIP, they can earn personal points without doing anything, but we will gain nothing."

After a pause, she added.

"The reason everyone is afraid of betrayal is because we can't trust each other yet. I can now represent Class B and promise everyone that as long as you're willing to cooperate, we will never betray you."

This was Honami Ichinose's personal credibility and also her weapon.