

Cote 21

Chapter 21 Ichinose Is Worried

Just after leaving the student council office, Kaoru Mitoma hadn't walked far before he spotted a familiar figure. Katsuragi Kohei.

The other boy was clearly surprised too, not expecting to see him here.

"Good afternoon." Kaoru Mitoma greeted him first. "Are you thinking of joining the student council too, Katsuragi?"

He'd originally wanted to ask why Kaoru Mitoma was here, but Kaoru Mitoma spoke up first, catching him off guard. Instinctively, Katsuragi nodded.

Sakayanagi Arisu performance today had been too impressive, making Katsuragi feel a sense of crisis. Besides, he'd already been considering the student council for a while. So he immediately got the application form ready and rushed over to the student council.

Who would've thought he'd run into Kaoru Mitoma in a place like this.

"Looks like I beat you to it. Sorry, I've already been accepted. But hey, good luck to you too." Kaoru Mitoma seemed to have guessed what he was thinking and offered him a friendly smile.

Katsuragi Kohei looked a bit puzzled. He hadn't interacted much with Kaoru Mitoma before, but the Kaoru Mitoma he remembered wasn't this gentle.

"Thanks, but can I ask you something?" Katsuragi Kohei said, "Does the student council have any requirements for applicants?"

"Basically, as long as the student council president thinks you're suitable, that's it. There aren't any specific requirements," Kaoru Mitoma answered honestly.

Katsuragi Kohei gave him a slight bow, thanking him again for his answer. But then, Katsuragi Kohei added another question. "Mitoma, if you don't mind me asking, you seem pretty close with Sakayanagi. Did she tell you to join the student council this time?"

Is he afraid he'll become one of Sakayanagi people?

"It's just my personal opinion, it has nothing to do with Sakayanagi," Kaoru Mitoma smiled. "Honestly, between you and Sakayanagi, I actually think you have more potential. You're kinder, you really care about your classmates, Katsuragi." Katsuragi Kohei was stunned for a moment, and Kaoru Mitoma didn't say anything else.

He just walked past him and left the corridor. Besides Katsuragi Kohei, there was also B Class Ichinose Honami. The two of them were actually pretty similar at heart—they both thought about others. It's just that the former isn't very noticeable, while the latter stands out more in that regard.

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"That's great!, I knew you could do it, Honami! I just knew the student council wouldn't turn you down!"

A cute, petite girl looked at Ichinose Honami, genuinely happy for her. Her face lit up with a bright smile, her eyes sparkling. But seeing her smile, Ichinose Honami actually looked a bit stiff, forcing a smile in return.

"I didn't expect the student council to have a second review. There probably aren't many chances for a do-over like this," someone sighed.

"Hey, Ichinose, what's going on?"

"Did you really join the student council?"

"I bet the student council realized they almost missed out on a future star member, so now they're trying to make up for it!"

With everyone staring at her, Honami Ichinose gaze flickered away, and she tried to sound as casual as usual.

"It was just a stroke of luck. I honestly thought I wouldn't make it into the student council, but then they suddenly told me I got in."

A lie—she'd only joined the student council because she was threatened by Nagumo Miyabi. Not only had she naively trusted Nagumo, but she'd also let Kaoru Mitoma from Class A get something on her. Someone like her probably didn't deserve everyone's trust, right?

"Heh, I always knew our Honami could get into the student council! I've never doubted it for a second!"

The girl instinctively tried to puff out her chest, but then realized it looked a bit silly and immediately stopped, blushing furiously.

"Thank you, Chihiro-chan."

Right now, Honami Ichinose couldn't bring herself to look at the girl, because she reminded her a bit of her own little sister. Seeing her like this made her think of her sister, made her remember that moment. Shiranami Chihiro, one of the good friends she'd made in Class B.

"By the way, Ichinose, did you ask us to stay just to announce this?" a boy asked.

Today, before class started, Ichinose Honami arrived at the classroom later than ever, and for some reason, she told everyone to stay after school, saying she had something to announce. His question got quite a few reactions from the class, and for a moment, all eyes were on Ichinose Honami. But no one was upset or complained, the students of Class B just found it odd.

Ichinose Honami took a few deep breaths. At the very least, she had to do something for everyone.

"Actually, I have something really important to tell you all. It's about the truth of this school, and I think the sooner you know, the better."

She held nothing back and told the class everything about the conversation between Nagumo Miyabi and Kaoru Mitoma, including her own suspicions. Halfway through, some people were already shaken. You could see the shock on everyone's faces.

When Ichinose Honami finished, everyone looked at each other, and the room was silent for a long time. The first to break the silence was a boy.

"No wonder the school is being so generous. Turns out they're only splurging for the first month."

Ichinose Honami looked over when she heard the voice and saw a tall, handsome guy. They didn't really interact much, but she knew his name was Kanzaki Ryuji.

Still, it was the first time anyone had heard something like this, so it was only natural that some people in the class couldn't accept it right away. "This is just too much. Only Class A gets the right to choose their university or job freely?

So what, we get nothing?

Some people came here for the free tuition, but others were here for the chance at a better future. Finding out all of a sudden that they might not get what they wanted, it was only natural to feel anxious or discouraged. Just as Ichinose Honami was about to say something to comfort everyone, someone beat her to it.

"Haha, sure, it's all about ability, but we're not that bad, right? We started out in Class B, after all."

The one who spoke was Shibata Sō, who was really popular in class and also pretty athletic—he'd already joined the soccer club.

"If we work a little harder, maybe we'll make it to Class A in no time." Shibata Sō tried to lighten the mood, grinning from ear to ear. But honestly, what he said was pretty much true. After all, Class B was just one step away from Class A.

"I think so too. The school wouldn't put all the outstanding students in Class A, or there'd be no point in competing. So we still have a chance."

Ichinose Honami finished Shibata So sentence, and sure enough, everyone visibly relaxed, their tense expressions easing up.

"I believe in Honami. As long as she's in our class, we'll be fine."

Shiranami Chihiro had been a bit worried, but seeing Ichinose Honami, she immediately put those concerns aside. She just didn't notice that when she said this, Ichinose Honami expression stiffened for a split second.

"So, what are you planning to do, Ichinose?"

Kanzaki Ryūji asked in a low voice. Ichinose Honami was silent for a moment before she spoke.

"We still don't know exactly how class points are gained or lost, so I think everyone should hold on to some of their personal points for now."

"Huh, are personal points really that important?"

Shirakawa Chihiro asked.

"I think they might not be much less important than class points. Personal points could end up being our weapon in the future."

Ichinose Honami had a sharp sense for the value of personal points, especially after the strong impression Kaoru Mitoma had left on her.

"Like, buying more information?" Kanzaki Ryūji suddenly said.

Ichinose Honami looked at him in surprise. This guy usually didn't talk much and didn't stand out, so she hadn't expected him to react so quickly.

"It's not just about information. There might be a lot of other uses we don't know about yet." She paused. "I hope everyone can work together and aim for Class A. What do you all think?"

"I agree!" Shiranami Chihiro was the first to raise her hand.

"Hahaha, of course, no problem!" Next was Shibata Sō, and then the other students, one after another, raised their hands too.

"Let's have you keep the points, Ichinose." Kanzaki Ryūji suggested.

"Yeah, yeah, let Honami take care of everyone's points!"

At this moment, all the goodwill Ichinose Honami had built up before, came back to her. No one even suggested another candidate. She was the obvious choice. On the very first day of school, everyone had already recommended her as class rep, so this was just a repeat of that. However, Honami Ichinose shrank back in that instant.

"Ahaha, I don't think it has to be with me. Why not give it to Kanzaki-kun or Shibata-kun instead?"

She put on a deliberately relaxed smile, but an inexplicable fear stabbed into her heart under everyone gaze, making her heart ache faintly. Honami Ichinose—she was starting to fear carrying too much trust. In fact, just saying what she did earlier had already taken a lot of courage.

'Look, this is proof of Honami Ichinose's crime.'

Ryuji Kanzaki frowned. He felt that Honami Ichinose was acting strange today, not as lively as usual. And besides, who told her all this information?