

Cote 601

Chapter 601: An Unintentional Act

Time rewound to Friday afternoon.

The café was filled with students after school.

"Shall we go somewhere quieter?"

Kaoru listened to the noisy chatter around them, mostly from girls, as if the entire café were a vibrant scene of youthful energy.

"Like my room?"

Sakayanagi Arisu bit her lip lightly, a teasing smile playing on her lips. "Last time was a reward for you. I don't just casually spend time alone with boys."

She still vividly remembered the strange things he had done to her in his room last time.

Though she wasn't particularly interested, the intense masculine presence and the sticky sensation were her first experiences.

Occasionally, she would recall the scene at night, as if remnants of it still lingered within her, stirring her sensitive heart.

Sakayanagi Arisu thought she should feel disgusted and angry, but afterward, she harbored no such emotions. Instead, she wore the ring he had given her on her finger.

Perhaps her subconscious had taken it as a humiliation, using it to push herself to strive harder and repay Kaoru double for the shame he had brought her.

"That's not what I meant either. Don't you think spending today like this is too mundane?"

Kaoru said, "Though I know you're usually proud and aloof, I think this might be a chance to build better relationships with everyone."

Sakayanagi Arisu blinked, then replied, "My father is coming tonight."

Kaoru fell silent for a moment. After all, it was his daughter's birthday.

As someone of high status, Sakayanagi Seishiro, even if forced out of Koudo Ikusei, could easily return to see his daughter.

"Disappointed?"

Sakayanagi Arisu flashed her usual mischievous grin. "Were you hoping to be alone with me tonight, thinking you might get to do something?"

As she spoke, she gently tapped Kaoru's calf under the table with what seemed to be her cane.

"What a pity. I could have teased Kaoru-kun a bit, but it seems Father found out about our relationship and specifically warned me to keep my distance from you."

Seeing Kaoru's expression, Sakayanagi Arisu felt quite pleased.

The gloom that had been weighing on her lifted, and she broke into a radiant smile.

"Actually, I've spoken with your father a little." Kaoru wasn't the least bit embarrassed. "Regarding your physical condition, I'm fairly confident I have a grasp on it."

Sakayanagi Arisu was momentarily stunned.

Her first reaction was disbelief, but upon second thought, considering how many secrets he carried, perhaps he truly had a solution.

After a moment of silence, the young girl spoke: "Why are you so concerned about me?"

In truth, even now, Sakayanagi Arisu didn't feel there was anything particularly special between them.

She owed Kaoru nothing, and he owed her nothing in return.

Kaoru might be drawn to her physically, but she was equally intrigued by his secrets.

They were perfectly matched in their motives.

Thus, Sakayanagi Arisu was puzzled: was he trying to win her over?

Did he want to toy with her heart and mind, to see her submit at his feet like Ichinose Honami and the others?

Sakayanagi didn't believe he could succeed.

She had already seen through his intentions, so it was impossible.

"I'll help if I can, but if I can't, I won't," Kaoru said. "If you must overthink it, just consider it a return gift for the one you gave me before."

Sakayanagi thought for a long time.

Had she ever given Kaoru anything?

A Christmas gift? A Valentine's gift?

Then, she saw Kaoru take a white beret out of his bag.

"I really didn't know what you'd like, so I picked out a hat for you," Kaoru said, placing it in front of her.

"Spring is here—maybe a change of style would be nice."

After sitting down, Sakayanagi removed the gray beret from her head and set it aside on the table, creating a contrast with the one he had given her.

His beret had a small bear on the side, making it cuter and more cartoonish.

Sakayanagi wanted to tell him she really wasn't an elementary school girl, and if he kept this up, she would get angry.

Just then, the server brought over the dessert—a small cake with a single lit candle placed in front of her.

"Happy birthday."

Kaoru hadn't actually planned to gather a crowd to celebrate her birthday.

The cake was just a café dessert, and the candle was one he had asked the server to buy.

"Your arrangements are quite surprising," Sakayanagi said, taking a deep breath to calm herself.

"But thank you."

"I accept it. You can blow out the candle now—no need to make a wish."

Kaoru had already noticed the occasional glances from others.

It was as if he had become a celebrity; whenever he was with a girl, people would stare.

"Why?" Sakayanagi asked, hearing for the first time someone suggest not making a wish.

"Is there something Arisu can't achieve that she needs to wish for?" Kaoru looked at her strangely.

Sakayanagi's lips twitched. She felt he was mocking her, but it didn't seem like it, so she swallowed her irritation.

Usually, she was the one teasing others, but ever since meeting Kaoru, she had repeatedly been left speechless by him.

Sakayanagi's eyes sparkled as she blew out the candle, then smiled softly at Kaoru.

"Honestly, you're quite good at charming girls. Even I'm a little moved, Kaoru-kun."

Kaoru watched her toss the candle into the trash, unsure what she was moved by when she was being so merciless.

"Thank you for the gift and the cake."

Sakayanagi picked up a piece of cake with her fork. "As a reward, I'd like to feed you the first bite myself. Is that okay?"

"Can you feed me with your mouth?" Kaoru probed.

"Hehe, that depends on your performance, Kaoru-kun," Sakayanagi said with a smile. "You know, right now, I have this feeling of wanting to keep you by my side forever—somewhere no one can disturb us, just you and me."

Kaoru felt a slight chill, as if recalling the days in the basement.

"Alright, open your mouth quickly."

Sakayanagi Arisu brought the cake close to his lips.

Kaoru instinctively opened his mouth, but she accidentally tilted it, smearing the cake all over his face.

"Eh, Kaoru-kun, why aren't you eating the cake with your mouth?"

Seeing Sakayanagi Arisu's shocked expression, Kaoru fell silent.

This girl was practically a grade-schooler!

If she held a grudge, she would retaliate—especially vindictive.

...

"Wait, he just gave you a hat, and you smeared cake on his face?"

After hearing Sakayanagi Arisu's explanation, Kamuro Masumi couldn't stay calm.

"It was an accident, a mishap."

Sakayanagi Arisu denied any intentional behavior. "Besides, isn't smearing cake on someone's face a birthday tradition?"

"Of course, I know that!"

Kamuro Masumi was furious. "But at the very least, you should have taken a photo! It's rare to see him embarrassed like that—I really wanted to see it!"

Well, no wonder they got along so well. Sakayanagi Arisu immediately shed her guilt.

"Didn't you skip class with him last time? He didn't give you any cake? You didn't smear it on his face?"

"I... had a little accident that time."

Kamuro Masumi stammered, too embarrassed to admit that not only had she failed to smear cake on Kaoru's face, but she had ended up with white cream all over herself instead.

However, Kamuro Masumi felt a hint of pride.

Because Kaoru had originally intended to smear it on her face, but she refused, so it ended up on her body.

In a way, that still counted as Kaoru losing face.

Thinking about Sakayanagi Arisu again, Kamuro Masumi became more reserved and gave her an encouraging look.

This girl clearly treasured the gift she received, even swapping out her original hat immediately to show it off, yet she stubbornly refused to admit her true feelings.

Even if Kaoru had only given her a small cake, Kamuro Masumi suspected that even if he turned her into a cream puff, this girl would still act tough.

Sakayanagi Arisu had no idea what Kamuro Masumi was thinking about her.

If she had known, Kamuro Masumi probably wouldn't have lived to see the next morning.

At that moment, Sakayanagi Arisu was thinking about the exams.

Over the past few days, she hadn't brought up the topic with Kaoru, and he had tacitly avoided it as well.

She knew Kaoru wouldn't interfere, probably because he believed she couldn't win all seven matches.

As long as she lost even one, Kaoru would have already won the bet.

The exam was unfair to her, but Sakayanagi Arisu didn't complain.

Instead, it ignited a competitive fire within her.

It just Ichinose Honami—she'd win.

Chapter 602: White Silk Gym Suit

"Welcome back, Goshujin-sama~"

As soon as Kaoru returned to his dorm, he saw Kushida Kikyo waiting for him at the entrance.

The girl wore a bright smile, and her eyes seemed to sparkle with heart-shaped glee upon seeing him.

What took Kaoru by surprise, however, was her outfit—she was wearing a gym suit unique to Japan.

The white short sleeves clung tightly to her chest, outlining perky peaks that seemed to hide a hint of something more.

Beneath the sleeves, her snow-white arms were exposed, giving off an inexplicably seductive vibe. The lower half was a pair of blue shorts, her perky bottom appearing particularly enticing—plump and full yet still bearing traces of youthful innocence.

Her legs were clad in white thigh-high socks, slightly squeezing the smooth flesh of her thighs, making them look even plumper and softer.

"Master, master, let me help you take off your shoes."

Kushida Kikyo, with a somewhat shy smile, knelt before Kaoru and naturally reached out her small hands to remove his shoes.

This movement, this posture, inadvertently allowed Kaoru to catch a glimpse of the girl's waist and hips, stretching into an extremely alluring curve.

At the same time, a downward glance revealed a slight swaying at the collar of her blouse.

"What are you doing?"

Kaoru took a deep breath.

This girl was getting increasingly bold!

"Huh?"

Kushida Kikyo blinked her eyes, "I'm helping Master take off his shoes."

Kaoru watched as she helped him remove his shoes and neatly arranged them together.

Kushida Kikyo glanced at Kaoru intentionally or unintentionally.

Her posture was somewhat seductive, making one unable to resist the urge to press her head down.

Kaoru reached out and tapped her head.

"Ouch!"

Kushida Kikyo puffed out her cheeks.

Wasn't she attractive enough?

"If you keep this up, I'll have no choice but to take you out on a leash."

Kaoru said, "Seeing the little angel being led around by a man would probably shatter many people's dreams."

"Okay, okay..."

Kushida Kikyo was initially delighted, but noticing his expression wasn't quite right, she quickly changed her tune.

"No, no! I'm the little angel. You can't ruin my glorious image!"

Kaoru restrained himself.

He knew this little angel had long been corrupted, and just like the others, she wasn't afraid of him at all.

In the past, Kushida Kikyo would likely have turned pale with a humiliated look in her eyes, yet she would have no choice but to lower her head and apologize.

But now, she was ecstatic, eagerly wishing Kaoru would turn her into a cream puff.

Therefore, Kaoru forcibly suppressed his thoughts and walked straight past Kushida Kikyo, immediately spotting Horikita Suzune quietly reading a book.

"You're back."

Horikita Suzune glanced up slightly but didn't pay much attention to him, seemingly ignoring Kushida Kikyo behind him.

"Weren't the exam events just announced today?"

Kaoru took the opportunity to sit beside her, "I thought you wouldn't come over until after the exams were over."

To be honest, he thought Ichinose's events were already outrageous enough, but he never expected Ryuen's events to be even more absurd.

Karate, Judo, Taekwondo, Kendo, Wrestling, etc.—it was almost as if he had written "I want to fight" outright.

Ryuen had completely abandoned normal events.

However, even if Ryuen added written exam subjects, given Class C's current level, they would still likely lose to Class D and could easily crash and burn.

"Because our Command Tower is currently filled with nothing but lewd thoughts."

Horikita Suzune's voice was calm, "Besides, we communicate via phone anyway, so location doesn't matter."

Kushida Kikyo leaned in closer.

The girl's softness and faint fragrance made Kaoru feel somewhat heated. It took him a while to remember that Class D's Command Tower was Kushida Kikyo.

"Actually, I wanted Horikita to wear it too, but she absolutely refused."

Kushida Kikyo whispered into his ear, "If you don't experience Horikita soon, she'll cut her hair before long."

Horikita Suzune heard this clearly and coldly remarked, "You don't seem to care about embarrassing yourself in front of others at all."

"Is this really considered embarrassing?"

Kushida Kikyo clung to Kaoru's arm like a warm marshmallow constantly pressing against him, "I'm not forcing you to stay here. Am I bothering you by being Master's little puppy?"

Her words made it seem as if she hadn't been the one egging Kaoru on earlier.

Horikita Suzune couldn't understand what she was doing—it was as if her entire being, including her soul, had completely fallen.

"Alright, stop arguing."

Kaoru felt a headache coming on.

He thought the two would gradually get along better, but instead, things were getting worse.

"Isn't it exam season now? Can't you two at least take it seriously? If we lose again, we'll have nothing left."

Horikita Suzune pondered for a moment: "Class C abandoning the written exam is actually an advantage for us."

She knew Class C's academic ability wasn't much higher than Class D's.

Students like Ishizaki Daichi and Ibuki Mio, who were simple-minded, generally achieved poor results.

Even Ryuen could be considered at the bottom of the class.

Based on this, Horikita had initially planned to place some bets on the written exam, even using Kushida Kikyo to gather information about Class C's usual academic performance.

The top students Ryuen could utilize were probably limited to Kaneda Kaneda, Shiina Hiyori, and a few others.

So far, having studied one week longer than Class C gave them some advantage.

"These days, Class C students have been frequently pestering us, probably trying to gather intelligence."

Kushida Kikyo seemed somewhat exasperated. "Several times, I've noticed them following our classmates, and they're getting increasingly bold. Sudo nearly got into a fight with them."

Horikita glanced at Kaoru, though she knew the Student Council couldn't intervene.

Such minor disputes were inherently difficult to adjudicate—if the followers stubbornly denied it or maintained distance while tailing, what could anyone do?

Besides, they hadn't actually done anything.

"Just following?" Kaoru asked.

"What else?" Kushida grumbled. "If they'd done anything, with you as my backup, I would've called my master over immediately."

Kaoru frowned slightly.

While this behavior aligned with Ryuen's style, it was strange that beyond following, they hadn't taken any real action.

Did they genuinely believe they could secure ultimate victory through fighting prowess?

"By the way, about the hairstyle," Horikita suddenly extended her hand, gesturing toward her long hair.

"What length do you think would be suitable?"

Kushida immediately made a strange expression, though Kaoru didn't notice.

Kaoru reached out and touched her hair strands, feeling as if running his fingers through fine sand—soft and delicate.

Was this the charm of a beautiful girl with straight black hair?

"Anything but bald would be fine."

As his words fell, both girls stared at him expressionlessly, making him feel somewhat uneasy.

Had he said something wrong?

"While she still has hair, quickly act on it," Kushida urged, wanting to help Mitoma unleash Pandora's Box.

"If you miss today, she might not agree later."

Kaoru pressed her to the ground and was about to say something to Horikita when he noticed she didn't seem angry—instead, the tips of her ears were slightly red.

'Wait, why are you avoiding eye contact?'

Seemingly aware of Kaoru's gaze, Horikita continued reading nonchalantly and said.

"Although I find it disgusting, do as you wish. Indulging your hobbies could somewhat count as the cup's task."

Below them, Kushida nudged Kaoru.

"Hehe, this is much more fun than the cup. No need for you to clean up—Isn't that convenient?"

The girl's eyes were seductive.

If even the cup was this convenient, how much more so his little puppy?

Chapter 603: The Comedic Character

Horikita Suzune was a beautiful girl with straight black hair.

Due to her personality, she appeared as an unapproachable flower on a high peak, making it difficult for others to get close to her.

Not only that, but thanks to her usual attitude, this beautiful girl who stands aloof while possessing talents beyond ordinary people's reach could ignite conquest desires in most.

Beyond conquest, there's an even stronger urge to taint her pride, to witness her fall into dark abysses, to destroy what she considers precious.

Kushida Kikyo admitted she too harbored dark thoughts.

She had always disliked people like Horikita Suzune, constantly fighting the impulse to defile the girl before her.

Thus, feeling her small hands could no longer contain this swelling intensity, watching raven hair glisten with dew-like moisture, even seeing the metaphorical spring snow slowly melt on Horikita Suzune's delicate face - a twisted pleasure surged within her.

Could anything feel better than this?

Horikita Suzune touched her own cheek, still warm.

She initially wanted to get angry, since Kaoru and Kushida had gone too far, nearly involving her books.

But this quantity was unusual, puzzling Horikita Suzune.

Could doing this to her really be that satisfying?

The last time there was this much, she remembered Kaoru insisting on her face.

"Master's thoughts really align with mine."

Kushida Kikyo gently kissed the culprit, her eyes burning with intensity that seemed tangible.

"Now, would you like to experience little Kikyo's massage?"

Horikita Suzune averted her gaze. Both of them were perverts.

Watching her, Kaoru regained some rationality.

Men were such base creatures, easily controlled by them.

"Are you really okay?"

While satisfied, Kaoru felt somewhat awkward. Under Kushida Kikyo's encouragement, he inevitably lost self-control.

"I've grown accustomed to perverts."

Horikita Suzune continued reading, apparently not intending to clean up immediately, instead letting Kaoru see her current state.

"Also, I want you to teach Kikyo a lesson."

Kushida Kikyo felt displeased.

She was rewarding this guy - why should she be punished?

But before she could speak, Kaoru covered her mouth.

"Every time I feel like I've become your tool."

Kaoru thought maintaining rationality was impressive, especially with Kushida Kikyo wearing the White Silk Gym Suit that made her already curvaceous figure impossible to ignore.

"Is that so?"

Horikita Suzune caught a faint scent. "Sometimes I think you're just enjoying yourself."

"This makes me want to take commemorative photos."

Kaoru hooked her chin, turning her toward him. "I remember writing similar scenes in my notebook - reading while the other..."

"Why would I record such disgusting things?"

Horikita Suzune's voice remained cool, meeting Kaoru's gaze without fluctuation. "

What do you want me to do for you?"

Kaoru couldn't guess her thoughts.

Regardless, she looked quite seductive now, inexplicably stirring impulses for further Conditioning.

"Mmph mmph!"

Kushida Kikyo patted Kaoru, tears welling in her eyes as if trying to tell him something.

Horikita Suzune turned away imperceptibly.

She had been diligently studying various knowledge, understanding her own advantages and men's desires.

She only needed to maintain her natural self to make Kaoru unable to resist, unlike Kushida Kikyo's methods. It had been nearly a month since the last time.

Despite never having any particular interest before, Horikita Suzune found herself occasionally thinking about Kaoru, sometimes unconsciously touching her lower abdomen.

She seemed to recall hearing somewhere that if you like someone, you'd want to marry them, stay with them forever, and have children with them.

Horikita Suzune's ears faintly reddened, but Kaoru didn't notice.

Instead, he pressed Kushida Kikyo against the floor.

"Does Kikyo want her master's reward?"

Kaoru looked down at her from above.

"Hiks... I won't dare anymore..."

Kushida Kikyo clamped her legs together, trembling like a frightened little animal, though the excitement in her eyes betrayed her true feelings.

"M-master, could you please not bully a girl?"

Kaoru silently pulled out a pack of gum.

The girl's expression instantly froze before blooming into a bright smile.

"Oh, Master, really. You should just let me take care of such things."

Kushida Kikyo put on a stern face. "Actually, I already have some on me. Why did you bother buying a new pack?"

Kaoru searched her for a moment before finding a dried-out gum wrapper.

"Just one?"

"Ahaha, how strange. How did it end up being just one?"

Kushida Kikyo played dumb.

Of course there was only one—otherwise, how could she keep pestering Kaoru Tōru?

Some things, once started, couldn't be stopped.

Especially with Kaoru, who was controlled by his desires.

He probably wouldn't be able to resist teaching her a lesson several times, and that would be her victory.

"Fine, we'll use this for now."

Kaoru threw away her gum, opened his own pack, and looked at her with a faint smile.

"Gulp... Can we make peace?"

Kushida Kikyo could no longer keep up the act.

Without the cream, her little cake would be completely unpalatable!

"Master's reward should be accepted with gratitude."

Kaoru tossed the gum to her. "What should we do now?"

Kushida Kikyo cast a pleading glance toward Horikita Suzune, who pretended not to see.

"Don't rub against me."

Horikita Suzune was cold, immediately distancing herself from Kushida Kikyo and even actively moving farther away.

It wasn't that she disliked Kaoru, but she could no longer accept the way barriers existed between them, even though she wouldn't refuse him.

Kushida Kikyo hung her head in defeat and obediently complied.

Soon after, Horikita Suzune's ears turned completely red, and even her originally pale neck flushed crimson.

"In the coming days, I'll teach everyone Karate, Judo, and similar activities."

The girl suddenly spoke. "Aside from Albert being a bit troublesome, the others shouldn't be a problem."

"You know how to fight?"

Kaoru had to view her in a new light.

No wonder her flexibility was somewhat exceptional.

"Because my brother learned it, I followed along and learned too."

Horikita Suzune thought for a moment. "However, what I learned temporarily might not be effective. Right now, I just hope we can secure wins in our own events."

The minimum condition to pass this exam was four wins and three losses.

As long as Horikita Suzune could win four matches, it would be enough.

"After we win," Horikita Suzune smiled faintly at him, "I'll probably cut my hair."

She hadn't always had long hair.

She'd grown it out only because her brother liked it.

She wanted Kaoru to see her past self—the version that had once made her brother proud, so she wanted him to know she had that side to her.

She wanted Kaoru to see that she had the ability to surpass Ryue, Ichinose and even the potential to surpass him.

At the very least, she wanted to stand by Kaoru's side.

However, Kaoru felt a strange sensation; though the girl before him was as beautiful as a painting, he felt as if he were rushing at her.

"Ah....."

Kushida Kikyo also sensed his thoughts and grew somewhat self-destructive.

She hadn't felt this humiliated earlier, but now, watching their conversation, she felt ashamed.

"I'm here!"

A voice sounded at the door.

Kaoru turned to see Ichinose Honami appearing at the entrance, even wearing an innocent, adorable smile.

The next moment, her smile froze.

"Wah!"

Ichinose Honami's entire face flushed bright red, visibly panicking. "S-sorry to interrupt! I'm really sorry!"

Horikita Suzune wanted to cover her face with a book; she was too embarrassed to face anyone.

"Honami-chan!"

Kushida Kikyo desperately reached out her small hand toward Ichinose Honami, her eyes full of longing.

"Save me! Please save me!"

Kaoru pressed down on her small hand, his expression blank.

"W-wait, stop!"

Kushida Kikyo seemed to have lost her patience, unable to endure hours of torment.

"Honami-chan! This guy's massages are deadly!"

However, she forgot that Ichinose Honami had actually experienced it before.

After the initial shyness and panic, Ichinose Honami realized she was just complaining for the sake of it.

Though Kaoru was a bit rough, he wasn't using any violent methods.

If Kushida Kikyo were truly uncomfortable, she would have run away herself.

Ichinose Honami suspected she just wanted to drag her into the mess, so she ignored her.

"I brought some delicious treats for you! Try them quickly!"

Chapter 604: Abducting Hiyori

After the exam topics for each class were announced, everyone threw themselves into intense, orderly practice and preparation.

Kaoru, however, was quite idle.

These past few days, he finally showed his face among the upperclassmen to campaign for votes.

Moreover, the Student Council planned to act decisively before Spring Break, holding the general election next week.

Nagumo Miyabi was eager to counterattack, trying to win people over with his old methods.

But Kaoru kept a close watch on his actions and falsely accused him of attempting to buy votes with Personal points.

Damn it, he hadn't even made a move yet!

And yet you, who were also cozying up to the upperclassmen, had the nerve to falsely accuse him?

On one hand, Nagumo Miyabi didn't want to lose his authority in the Student Council.

On the other hand, he was already deeply mired in the troubles of the second year.

Not only were other classes showing signs of rebellion, but even his own base was in turmoil.

Lately, he had been overly suspicious, convinced that everyone around him was out to harm him.

This led to rifts with his classmates, and combined with Asahina Nazuna's influence on him, there was basically no chance of recovery.

Taking advantage of this year's exams, Nagumo Miyabi specifically targeted a group of traitors, forcing Tonokawa Sosuke to seek help from Kaoru.

However, Kaoru had no solutions either.

Iijima Ryota had accidentally been exposed, leaving him with only pawns that existed in Nagumo Miyabi's imagination.

Whenever he thought about these messy matters, Kaoru couldn't help but sigh.

He really wanted to impress everyone by declaring, "Stop fighting, I've got plenty of money—just give me a smile!"

Perhaps it was precisely to prevent such situations that the school kept everyone confined on campus, cutting off contact with the outside world.

Kaoru recalled Sakayanagi Narumori mentioning that every student had been carefully considered by the school, with an admission list finalized even before the entrance exams.

He was curious about their criteria.

Though it seemed mysterious, Kaoru felt most students were actually quite ordinary.

If he had to describe it, it was like mixing students from different circles and backgrounds, then forcing them to live and study under the same set of rules.

For example, Class C first-year students, led by Ryuen Kakeru, came across as particularly delinquent.

These students wouldn't have been able to get into schools with high academic standards and originally had no chance of encountering Class A students—yet now they shared the same stage.

Even without mentioning Class A, the internal dynamics were interesting in their own right.

In a familiar spot, Kaoru could already see a familiar figure.

"Good afternoon, Shiina-san."

The girl, who had been buried in her book, lifted her delicate face and smiled at him.

"It's been a while since you last came."

Carrying his novel, Kaoru sat down beside Shiina Hiyori, leaving just enough space between them to be considered presumptuous—after all, the girl usually didn't sit so close to anyone.

But he was a presumptuous guy, and Shiina had grown accustomed to his boldness.

"I remember coming once or twice every month, don't I?"

Kaoru usually visited her occasionally, sometimes spotting Ichinose Honami and Yamamura Miki chatting with her.

Shiina felt a bit embarrassed.

oticing he was holding a novel by Yukio Mishima, she wondered why he'd taken a liking to that style.

He had always been into lewd things—or rather, "critically artistic" novels—and would sometimes pretentiously pull out passages to discuss with her, making her puff her cheeks in irritation.

This presumptuous guy could really be too much at times.

"Was the chocolate good?" Kaoru asked.

He'd given the chocolate to Shiina a few days prior but hadn't managed to sneak into her room.

"It was delicious."

Remembering his chocolate, Shiina's cheeks flushed slightly.

The guy had claimed he made it himself—she wondered if that was true.

Kaoru gazed at her earlobes.

Her crystal-clear skin seemed to hide faint red traces, soft and rosy, making him want to take a bite.

Shiina's ears turned even redder.

Though still somewhat naive about matters between boys and girls, she knew Kaoru had been stealing glances at her—subtly at first, then more openly later.

She used to discuss novels with Kaoru every time, but ever since he started bringing up those "critical arts," she'd felt too shy to continue.

"Aren't you preparing for the exams, Shiina-san?"

Kaoru had no reservations, especially since they weren't opponents in this particular test.

"I can't contribute much to the projects our class is preparing."

Shiina replied, "But if Class D wants to compete with us in written exams, I'll have no problem handling that."

In other words, Ryuen Kakeru had no intention of focusing on written exams at all.

Kaoru was about to continue when she asked, "Are you worried, Kaoru-kun, that Ryūen-kun might clash with Class D students?"

From exam day until now, Class C of first year had been frequently harassing Class D of first year, with conflicts nearly breaking out multiple times, though Class C always backed down in the end.

Shiina Hiyori was fully aware of what her own class had been doing.

"If any disputes escalate to the Student Council, it would become troublesome for both sides."

Kaoru invoked his Student Council identity, which somewhat justified his involvement in these matters.

"I'll convey this to Ryuen-kun."

Though Shiina Hiyori found it slightly strange, she didn't dwell on it further.

After reading together for a while, Kaoru suddenly closed his book, his face contemplative.

"Shiina-san, have you ever thought about writing a novel?"

"Huh?"

"Like writing down the stories in your heart and sharing them with everyone."

His explanation was unnecessary - Shiina Hiyori was just surprised by his sudden suggestion.

Then, the girl's heart skipped a beat as an inexplicable warmth flowed through her body, making her immediately think of her father.

"Why bring this up suddenly?"

"I've always felt the Student Council has almost no presence. Besides distributing club funds and acting as referees, everyone seems uninterested in our Student Council."

"Isn't that how it is in most schools?"

"It's different here. We're special - even during sports festivals and cultural festivals, the school intervenes, reducing the Student Council to mere errand runners."

"So, are you planning to reform the Student Council?"

Kaoru nodded with satisfaction, thinking Shiina Hiyori was quite perceptive to follow his train of thought.

"I plan to have the Student Council publish a school magazine to increase our presence. Would you like to write your own novel, Shiina-san?"

Shiina Hiyori barely blinked, clenching her small fists as her heart raced wildly.

Writing her own story?

"Although the school has a student forum, nobody usually engages with it seriously, and there's little communication between different grades. What do you think about having a student story club?"

Actually, Kaoru was thinking of something like a campus wall, but that would be tricky since the school fears inter-grade communication might lead to exam information leaks.

After experiencing a year here, Kaoru felt the school's worries were unnecessary - if students wanted to leak information, no amount of school precautions could completely prevent it.

Since that's the case, he might as well use reform as an excuse to recruit Shiina Hiyori.

Every literature girl has a restless heart.

"Story club?"

Shiina Hiyori looked somewhat confused.

Kaoru nodded: "Everyone could publish their own content on it. More prestigious schools all have their own campus publications. Actually, our school's literature club wanted to start one too."

Sure enough, Shiina Hiyori's eyes sparkled brightly as she looked at him.

This school magazine could only attract this particular girl - after all, Kaoru had decided to become president, so it was only reasonable for him to recruit some beautiful girls as his subordinates.

Maybe he could even teach her to write some lewd things... ah, no, critically artistic content.

Chapter 605: I'll Bite You to Death Sooner or Later

Shiina Hiyori was indeed somewhat tempted, because her father was a writer, though not a famous one.

Thus, she was exposed to this bizarre and fantastical world earlier than her peers.

Works by authors like Natsume Soseki, Akutagawa Ryunosuke, Edogawa Ranpo, Ayatsuji Yukito, and Miyazawa Kenji formed the foundation of her childhood.

From the moment she learned to read, she would often stay in her father's study.

Sometimes she would flip through books she couldn't understand at the time, and other times she would watch her father hunched over his writing.

Her father would hold her in his arms and tell her stories about certain authors, occasionally bursting into laughter.

His beard would brush against her, making her instinctively grab at it.

However, more often than not, she saw her father sitting motionless at his writing desk for entire days.

Is this what being a writer means?

The young Shiina Hiyori felt puzzled.

Later, she understood—because her father couldn't write commercially successful works, this situation had become the norm.

As she grew older, Shiina Hiyori became more interested in literature and novels.

Though partly influenced by her father, she was genuinely curious about this world.

Gradually, she finished reading Japanese literature, then moved on to popular fiction, and eventually to foreign classics.

Before she knew it, she had read countless books.

Among them, Ayatsuji Yukito's mystery novels left a deep impression on Shiina Hiyori, and soon she fell headfirst into the mystery genre.

After reading so much, it was only natural to wonder if she could write one herself.

Of course, Shiina Hiyori didn't think she could become famous overnight—she just thought there would be no harm in trying, right?

"Shiina, you really like mystery novels, don't you?"

Kaoru didn't know the full context but could guess the literary girl's thoughts.

"Why don't you give it a try?"

"Eh, I don't think I can do it..."

Shiina Hiyori felt embarrassed. What if her writing wasn't good?

"It's fine. It'll just circulate within our school anyway. At worst, you can publish under a pen name."

Kaoru didn't see any problem with it.

With only a few hundred teachers and students in the entire school, this school publication was just a Game.

Shiina Hiyori felt tempted but didn't agree immediately.

Seeing this, Kaoru smiled slightly: "If anyone dares to say your writing is bad, I'll go straight to their classroom."

"Who would do that? Are you trying to get me anti-fans?"

Shiina Hiyori looked at him reproachfully, though she knew he was just trying to comfort her.

After hesitating for a moment, she whispered, "I'm just a bit worried. I've never had any experience in this before."

"As long as you're interested, that's enough."

Kaoru said, "How many things in this world come with experience? If you never do anything without experience, wouldn't you remain inexperienced forever?"

Shiina Hiyori thought he had a point and couldn't help but smile.

"Looks like you agree. I'll be waiting for your submission then."

Kaoru pressed his advantage. This school publication was essentially created just for her, though nominally it welcomed submissions from everyone.

Shiina Hiyori nodded subconsciously.

Only after a while, seeing Kaoru's expression, did she seem to realize something was off.

"Wait, no—why are you asking me about this?"

She hadn't yet realized she had already boarded Kaoru's "pirate ship."

"Because you're the only person I know who would be interested."

Kaoru spread his hands, appearing innocent while actually thinking to himself that this NPC only spawned in the library and was usually too hard to approach, with few conversation topics available.

This made it impossible for him to fulfill even one or two wishes with Shiina Hiyori, such as teaching her some peculiar knowledge.

Despite having read so many risqué books, Shiina Hiyori only blushed, and her wishes remained completely unchanged.

Later, Kaoru figured it out.

Shiina Hiyori had already seen it all—she was just shy, but that didn't mean she was ignorant.

No, he had to teach her something even wilder than what was in the books.

"R-Really?"

Shiina Hiyori was half-convinced by his words, but thinking about how she could write novels now, she was in a good mood and decided to let it slide for the time being.

The girl was no fool.

Having read so many mystery novels, she was sharp-witted and naturally sensed that Kaoru's intentions toward her were a bit off.

It felt strange—she couldn't quite put her finger on it. It wasn't acceptance, nor was it resistance.

Kaoru simply smiled.

He didn't press Shiina Hiyori further.

He wasn't the student council president yet; he'd wait until he took that position.

...

As dusk fell, the lingering afterglow set the sky ablaze with red, and the tree shadows trembled in the wind.

Kaoru left the library earlier than Shiina Hiyori.

After all, his dorm wasn't just his alone—if he returned too late, someone would throw a tantrum.

Perhaps this was one of the costs of enjoying a Harem.

Gazing at the blooming cherry blossoms, Kaoru felt an inexplicable sense of melancholy.

He stopped in front of a vending machine, intently selecting a drink.

At the same time, he spoke up, "Do you want anything to drink?"

He waited for a while, but no one answered.

"You've been following me for days—must be tough. I'm not bluffing; I've already spotted you. Compared to my Miki, your tracking skills are far worse."

As soon as he finished speaking, Kaoru heard footsteps.

"Since when?"

She probably wanted to ask when he had noticed her following him.

"Maybe it's because a beauty like you is rare, so I noticed you from the start."

Kaoru turned around to see Mio Ibuki standing behind him.

With her short, boyish haircut and flat chest, she looked like a tomboy, just the type to appeal to certain people.

"Want something to drink? My treat."

Faced with Kaoru's friendly gesture, Ibuki didn't take it kindly.

Instead, she scrutinized him with a critical gaze and asked. "Why are you getting close to Shiina from our class? Are you interested in her?"

"You seem even more presumptuous than I am."

Kaoru raised an eyebrow.

Ibuki sneered, "I've been following you for days. I've noticed you're either hanging around Ichinose and her group or cozying up to senior girls."

Some girls might be into Kaoru, but Ibuki wasn't one of them.

She thought this guy was a total playboy—the nickname "Harem Overlord" suited him perfectly.

"Still, I'm way better than a creepy stalker like you."

Kaoru said, "At least they don't dislike me."

"What did you say!"

Ibuki instantly flared up.

What did he mean by "creepy stalker"? If Ryuen Kakeru hadn't ordered her to tail this guy, why would she bother!

"Strange, isn't it? People who stalk others are usually creeps, right?"

Kaoru looked at her oddly. "You haven't been secretly collecting my things, have you?"

His gaze seemed to see right through Mio Ibuki, even perceiving how she secretly collected his clothing, held it beneath her nose to inhale deeply, then couldn't resist sliding her hand downward while letting out soft moans.

Mio Ibuki truly couldn't restrain herself anymore.

She dashed forward in quick strides until she stood before Kaoru, grabbing his collar with one hand as if ready to throw a punch at any moment.

"You! If you want to fight, just say it outright!"

Kaoru glanced at her petite frame.

Limited by her height, she was standing on tiptoes to threaten him, yet even then she barely reached his chin.

"Fine. There are no surveillance cameras here anyway. Go ahead and strike - preferably stomping hard on my head with your foot."

No sooner had Kaoru spoken than a sudden gust of wind whipped past his clothes, followed by a clear metallic clang from the vending machine behind him vibrating violently.

His peripheral vision caught Mio Ibuki raising her slender leg high, ruthlessly kicking the vending machine behind him.

The exaggerated motion even revealed a glimpse beneath her fluttering skirt.

Yet Mio Ibuki appeared completely unconcerned about this exposure.

"I know you're trying to provoke me. I'm not an idiot," the girl declared. "If you dare tease me like this again, I'll strike regardless of surveillance cameras."

Kaoru suddenly laughed, causing Mio Ibuki to freeze mid-retraction of her leg.

"Hey! What are you laughing at?"

"Nothing. Just find your ferocious-yet-timid appearance somewhat amusing."

"You think you can beat me in a fight?"

Kaoru didn't bother responding.

Mio Ibuki was the quintessential combat-oriented girl - simple-minded, always resorting to violence against opponents.

Seizing the moment while her leg remained raised, Kaoru simply reached out and grasped her calf.

Mio Ibuki stiffened momentarily before reacting with lightning speed.

Leveraging his grip, she arched backward, supporting herself with both hands while raising her other leg high, aiming to kick at his hand.

Showing no consideration for the girl's feelings, Kaoru countered move for move.

With a twist of his arm, she spun uncontrollably several times before collapsing to the ground.

Before she could rise, he promptly pinned both her wrists against the floor.

Staring up at him in astonishment, Mio Ibuki clearly hadn't anticipated his strength nor how easily she'd been subdued beneath him.

"Bastard!"

The girl struggled to break free, her legs kicking mercilessly toward Kaoru's lower body.

While blocking her kicks, Kaoru allowed her hands to slip free.

But before she could fully rise, he seized her calf again, handling her thrashing form like a lively large fish as he pressed down on her petite frame.

Instinctively, Mio Ibuki tried to twist away from his grasp.

Smack

The girl froze mid-movement. Her pert bottom had just been struck.

Smack smack

Finding the sensation pleasantly round and soft - evidence of the girl's developed figure - Kaoru delivered several more strikes.

"Grr... I'll kill you!"

Mio Ibuki seethed with rage.

In all her years, this was the first time she'd been spanked, and by a boy no less!

"This is what happens when you stalk me," Kaoru stated, administering several more smacks.

Frankly, she was fortunate he wasn't doing worse, considering her audacity to threaten him.

"I'll bite you to death!" Mio Ibuki was absolutely furious, baring her teeth as if she wanted to bite him to death.

Kaoru placed his hand in front of her, and she immediately snapped at it.

But he swiftly pulled his hand back, leaving her gnashing her teeth in frustration, clearly seething with anger.

"What a pervert," Kaoru remarked.

Mio Ibuki's eyes widened in disbelief.

How dare he say that to her?

He was the one who had bullied her, the one who had spanked her—and now he had the audacity to call her a pervert?

"Kaoru! Just you wait! I'll bite you to death sooner or later!"

Chapter 606: Hehehe.

In all her life, she had never been this humiliated!

The more Mio Ibuki thought about it, the angrier she became.

If Kaoru Mitoma hadn't run away so quickly, she would have chased him all the way to the boys' dormitory, barged into his room, and bitten him to death!

She gently touched her small, upturned bottom, still feeling the sting.

A warm sensation lingered, and she was sure it had turned red from Kaoru's spanking.

'Damn it! How could someone who looked so frail possess such terrifying strength?'

The last time she had encountered something similar was with Albert, who stood like an immovable wall, impossible to budge even an inch.

Mio Ibuki stood there, grinding her teeth for a while, until she finally spotted Ryuen's figure.

"I failed at tailing him—he caught me!"

As soon as they met, Mio Ibuki immediately reported what had just happened to Ryuen.

However, she deliberately omitted the part about being spanked, secretly planning to reclaim her dignity in the next round.

"What did he say to you?"

Ryuen wasn't surprised. Instead, he noticed the girl's visible frustration and grew curious.

"He told us to watch our step. This was just a warning, and next time it won't be so lenient."

Mio Ibuki interpreted Kaoru's words that way.

Moreover, he hadn't held back at all, leaving her bottom aching.

"Hiyori just sent me a message, asking me to tone it down a bit."

Ryuen smirked. "It's so easy to see through what this guy is thinking."

He meddled in Class B's affairs, and now he was interfering in Class D's business too.

Did he have lovers in every grade?

"Should we continue tailing him?"

Mio Ibuki grumbled in frustration. "This guy is either at the Student Council or with the upperclassmen, or he's hanging out with girls. He doesn't seem to care about this exam at all."

"Heh, he's busy running for the Student Council."

Kaoru's whereabouts weren't exactly a secret. Through pawns like Mio Ibuki, Ryuen had already gathered enough information.

Once school was over, this guy was either working at the Student Council, canvassing and lobbying upperclassmen for votes, or going on dates with his lovers.

Mio Ibuki had been tailing him for three or four days straight, and the more she followed him, the more frustrated she became.

She felt like an entertainment reporter chasing celebrity scandals, constantly hovering around Kaoru and watching him flirt left and right. It was unbearable.

She didn't want gossip—she wanted a big scoop!

"I'll follow him for a few more days. Maybe I'll catch the traitor!"

Mio Ibuki refused to give up. "Even if there's no traitor, I might uncover Class A's secrets and sell them to Class B!"

Indeed, the reason she was tailing Kaoru was because Nagumo suspected that there was a traitor in Class C as well.

Ryuen had sent her to see if Kaoru was secretly contacting anyone.

From what she had observed so far, the only person Kaoru had contacted was Hiyori.

Could Hiyori be the traitor? Ibuki found it highly unlikely, and Ryuen was even more skeptical.

Anyone could betray them, but this literary girl had no reason to.

She was too detached.

Apart from novels, Shiina Hiyori rarely initiated conversations with others.

On multiple occasions, Ibuki had seen her gazing foolishly at the white clouds in the sky, as if everything in the class had nothing to do with her—she was like a cloud in the sky.

"Enough, your task is over."

Ryuen waved his hand dismissively. "If there is a traitor, the exposure of Ishida has made them aware of the danger now."

Even if Ibuki was unwilling to accept it, she had no better ideas at the moment.

Besides, she didn't really want to believe that there could be a traitor in their class.

"So, are we just going to do nothing?"

The girl spoke quickly, with a sense of urgency. "All along, we've only been harassing Class D students. That won't have any real impact. They're definitely planning to counter us with written exams."

The weakness of Class C was obvious—they weren't good at exams, which was actually similar to Class D.

"How can fighting alone guarantee a 100% chance of victory? Even if we draw our preferred events, Class D isn't lacking in capable fighters."

Though reluctant to admit it, Ibuki felt that Suzune Horikita was a worthy opponent, along with Sudo, Koenji, and others.

Class C wasn't in a guaranteed winning position.

"You seem to have strong opinions about my decisions."

Ryuen scoffed disdainfully. "It's because your perspective is so limited that you'll always remain beneath me, Ibuki."

Before Ibuki could explode in anger, Ryuen continued calmly, "We currently have over ten million private points. Do you understand their value?"

Ibuki was slightly taken aback, as if she was starting to grasp his meaning.

"Class D isn't an impenetrable fortress. With a little pressure, someone will be willing to be bought."

Ryuen had already made plans. If Nagumo could use points to win people over, why couldn't he?

"Who?"

Ibuki recalled what Ryuen had done before and felt a flicker of anticipation.

"That's none of your business."

Ryuen took something out of his pocket and tossed it to Ibuki. "Keep this. It'll be very useful."

Ibuki didn't even have time to get angry, fumbling to catch what he threw.

She looked at it and frowned slightly. "What is this?"

It was a small bag of white powder.

"It's a laxative with a delayed effect. It won't take effect until forty-eight hours later."

Ryuen's expression remained unchanged. "Have the people tailing Class D find a way to make someone drink this. On exam day, someone might just be absent."

Ibuki was instantly alarmed, suspecting Ryuen had lost his mind. "Hey, if this is discovered, we'll be finished!"

"Let them find out first. Do you think I care?" Ryuen said coldly.

Ibuki hesitated, wanting to say more but holding back.

The reason she submitted to him and didn't resist like Takeko Nishino was precisely because this person would stop at nothing to win.

She believed Ryuen could lead their class to seize the crown from Class A.

At that moment, Ryuen suddenly smiled.

"Relax, Ibuki. This is just a strategy." He said nonchalantly, "Play it well, and we might even reel in Mitoma."

Ibuki didn't understand—what was he planning to do?

"Two days before the exam, tell the person in charge of surveillance about the laxative."

Ryuen listed several students' names, including Manabe Shiho.

"If anyone tries to inform Mitoma, the spy will be obvious. We can abort the laxative plan anyway, since we haven't done it yet."

Mio Ibuki was exhilarated, feeling as if a sudden revelation had dawned upon her, yet doubts still lingered.

"Should we send someone to tail the person following us?"

"No need, it's too troublesome."

Ryuen could even envision the opponent's methods. "Sending a message is safer than meeting in person. They could do it at night, from their own room. What means do we have to stop that?"

"Then confiscate their phones!"

Mio Ibuki answered without hesitation.

Ryuen looked at her as if she were an idiot.

What if the other party risked meeting Kaoru in the dead of night?

Could they really stand guard all night?

"No, we need to let Mitoma know."

A shadowy smile crept onto Ryuen's face. "He's so clever—right now, he's probably having the spy lay low. He might have even deleted all contact methods, let alone chat records."

But forcing the spy to risk reconnecting with Mitoma would inevitably leave traces.

"Once this person sends the message, I'll immediately confiscate everyone's phones and investigate them one by one."

Ryuen grew inexplicably excited.

Though he somewhat suspected he might just be fighting shadows, actually uncovering a spy would prove his ability to outmaneuver Kaoru.

If there turned out to be no spy, he'd lose nothing—he could just continue dosing the Class D students!

By now, even Mio Ibuki was getting worked up.

She couldn't wait to see Kaoru taken down a peg!

Chapter 607: Overwhelming Advantage

Kaoru had been very busy these past few days.

The Student Council general election was approaching.

If they waited until Spring Break, students would no longer care about Student Council affairs.

Even with the school's endorsement, everyone was more concerned about upcoming exams.

Horikita Manabu had informed him that the third-years' conflict would be settled the day before the graduation ceremony.

Though unspoken, Horikita likely harbored some doubts about Kaoru's actions—launching an offensive against Nagumo during this period wasn't the most opportune timing.

In reality, apart from the encouraging feedback on the first day, few students had shown interest in Student Council matters since.

The progress made so far was largely due to the scandals surrounding Kaoru himself.

People loved drama, so topics involving him consistently trended.

However, this wasn't entirely beneficial.

The long-anticipated showdown everyone had been waiting for still hadn't materialized, leaving students bored and deeply disappointed.

Even so, Kaoru had to take the initiative.

Because Nagumo was equally tied up—on one hand, he was purging Kiryama and others, while on the other, he suspected a traitor in his class and was busy fighting imaginary battles.

Under the guise of canvassing for votes, Kaoru had been steadily draining Nagumo's energy and time.

Both sides were now competing to see who held greater influence.

Kaoru had the support of Horikita Manabu, Satou Keisaku, and others.

The remaining classes were also sending him suggestive signals, hinting they could be bought—if he could meet their price.

Yes, even small nations could sell their votes to major powers in the United Nations.

These lower-ranking classes were no different—they could certainly sell their support.

The reason they didn't dare do so openly was because it was dishonorable.

Both Kaoru and Nagumo were trying to catch the other in a misstep.

Nagumo was growing anxious.

He desperately wanted to buy votes, but with Kaoru watching closely, he forcibly restrained himself.

Even if he did attempt to buy support, Kaoru had deeper pockets, so there was no urgency at all.

After waiting for a long time, Nagumo finally lost his patience and tried to win back the second-year students by making various grand promises—like allowing class transfers without using points, and assuring them that as long as he remained Student Council President, they would receive plenty of benefits.

At the same time, he harshly suppressed Class 2-A.

Before Kaoru could even make a move, Mizowaki had already dropped out.

For a moment, Kaoru didn't know what to say, only that Nagumo could be ruthless to anyone.

It wasn't just Mizowaki's expulsion—Nagumo once again clamped down on Class 2-B.

Kiriyama was now behaving obediently and every time he saw Kaoru, he would approach him to express his support for Kaoru's bid to become Student Council President.

Occasionally, he would intentionally or unintentionally reveal the whereabouts of Kiryuin Fuka from his class.

Kaoru was indeed somewhat interested, but he simply didn't have the time to chat with Kiryuin Fuka right now.

...

Thursday afternoon, Student Council office.

"Nagumo-senpai is currently in second place, and Kaoru is in first."

Ichinose Honami tallied the votes and showed a faint smile. "The vote ratio is 55:86. That's great."

Because this election was sudden and unexpected, many procedures were simplified as much as possible.

Normally, students would cast their valuable votes in a general election, with the earlier stages serving only as campaigning and canvassing.

However, the problem was that exams were underway, and the school simply wasn't providing the time or venue to hold a general election.

The so-called general election now actually referred to the March 20th deadline—the final day for voting.

The results would be announced on that day, and regardless of how many students voted, the candidate in first place would become President.

"Tomorrow is the final result. Nagumo will probably make a desperate last stand."

Kaoru thought to himself that only a little over a hundred students had voted so far, with more than half still remaining silent.

These silent voters either didn't care or were waiting to see how things unfolded.

"Hehe, I can get everyone to vote for you."

Ichinose Honami was a bit embarrassed.

Actually, some students in her class had wanted to vote for her, but she had persuaded them to vote for her boyfriend instead.

Kaoru found it amusing and gently tapped her nose.

"When I helped you before, you were so reluctant. Why has it turned around now?"

"Not at all! This way, you'll owe me a favor, and next time I can really pressure you."

Ichinose Honami put on a stern face—she had already prepared her excuse.

"Hmph, we'll see who ends up at a disadvantage then."

Just as Kaoru was about to say something, she added with a fierce threat.

"If I don't get them to vote for you, should they vote for Nagumo-senpai instead? Do you want to see him come to our class tomorrow to campaign for votes?"

"He wouldn't stoop that low, would he?"

Kaoru hadn't considered that possibility.

Nagumo usually acted so proud and arrogant—would he really come to the first-year classes to beg for votes?

"Who knows." Ichinose Honami said, "Even you went to his territory. He could come to our first-year classes too."

At that moment, Katsuragi Kohei, who was nearby, spoke up.

"He's very likely to collaborate with Ryuen-kun."

Using Personal points to buy votes could easily backfire, raising doubts about the candidate's capabilities and damaging the Student Council's image.

But if he used something other than points, the situation would be different.

"Also, I think it's about time we told the class who to vote for." Katsuragi said, "Right now everyone is confused about who to vote for, opinions are in disarray."

Some wanted to vote for Ichinose Honami, while others naturally leaned toward Katsuragi himself, since only three first-year students served in the Student Council.

Additionally, there were scattered votes intended for other students.

Katsuragi felt it was necessary to step forward and consolidate everyone's opinions, otherwise tomorrow's voting would descend into chaos.

Kaoru thought for a moment before responding, "That's possible, but Honami, you shouldn't get involved. It would make people think you're just a puppet I manipulate. At the very least, I should be the one to propose cooperation with you."

Ichinose Honami pouted, but she knew he was right, so she didn't press the issue.

Instead, she asked, "Will it be a problem without our votes?"

"Even if he buys votes from Ryuen, it's just a skeleton in the tomb."

Kaoru knew this was the opponent's final card, but he hadn't yet played all his own.

Indeed, Kaoru hadn't yet deployed his reserves.

He had only mobilized the vote banks of Satou Keisaku and Horikita Manabu, leaving others untouched—such as Ichinose Honami’s class and his own.

Furthermore, people had been approaching Kaoru continuously, like Class 2-D and Class 3-D, wanting to sell their votes.

Originally, they had intended to sell to Nagumo, since he was currently at a disadvantage and more desperate for votes, hoping to fetch a higher price.

However, they also had their eyes on Kaoru’s side, attempting to drive up the price by playing both sides to see who would offer more.

Kaoru didn’t fall for it but inadvertently uncovered Nagumo’s situation—he was running out of funds.

Nagumo was simultaneously suppressing the second years while refusing to give up on the Student Council, causing his Personal points to deplete rapidly.

It was estimated they had dropped below ten million.

Because of this, Nagumo didn’t want to be taken for a fool either, driving the prices for the two classes so low that they had no choice but to turn back and curry favor with Kaoru.

Kaoru had no immediate plans to buy their votes.

By pulling Kiryama Ikua to his side and persuading the wavering Class 2-C, he would soon secure two additional vote banks.

Especially the latter—their relationship with Nagumo was awkward, and without contractual ties, Nagumo would find it difficult to turn the situation around.

If absolutely necessary, Kaoru could buy votes from Class 1-B and Class 1-D, benefiting his allies, and only then consider Class 2-D and Class 3-D.

The Student Council was overseeing this election, and he was part of it.

From his position, he controlled the overall situation, ready to deploy his full reserves at any sign of change.

Meanwhile, Nagumo, to break through the first line of defense, had already exhausted all his means.

The forces Nagumo could truly mobilize were likely limited to Ryuen and Class 3-B, amounting to at most eighty additional votes.

Even if Class 2-D and Class 3-D sold all their votes to Nagumo, it would only total a little over two hundred.

In contrast, if Kaoru secured the first-year votes, he would gain one hundred and twenty votes in one move.

Moreover, he still had Class 2-B and Class 2-C.

The most crucial point, however, was that Kaoru knew the second-year students disliked Nagumo more than they disliked him.

As long as he had that advantage, it was enough.

'In this battle, the forces were eight hundred thousand against six hundred thousand—the advantage was mine.'

Chapter 608: Even You Look Down on Me.

"Rejected?"

Looking at the girl before him, Nagumo felt a sense of incredulity, even wondering if he had misheard her.

"I don't understand. Give me a reason."

Suppressing his anger, Nagumo said, "This proposal only benefits your Class D. Defeating Class C and Class B, even replacing Class A—can you do it without my help?"

In response, Horikita Suzune remained remarkably calm.

"Sorry, but what help can you offer us right now? You're aware of the exam we're currently taking. Can you order Ryuen to lose to us directly?"

Of course, Nagumo couldn't do such a thing.

To make Ryuen concede, he would have to pay a price far exceeding 310 Class Points.

However, he wouldn't admit this openly, so he coldly replied, "I could order him to lose to you. I could even make Class B and Class A lose to you. But can you afford the cost?"

Horikita Suzune saw through his bluff and said bluntly, "Since you can't do it, I don't think we can cooperate."

Nagumo almost laughed in frustration. "Do you speak like this in front of Horikita-senpai as well?"

"I'm merely maintaining the appropriate attitude toward a stranger who suddenly approached me."

Horikita Suzune sipped her coffee.

Initially, she had been somewhat annoyed—after all, she was Kaoru's person, so why was this guy seeking her out?

After chatting for a while, she understood.

It seemed Nagumo hadn't realized this yet.

Thinking about it, she usually had almost no interaction with Kaoru.

Occasionally, she would sneak into his room alone after school in the afternoon. It was natural that no one knew.

So, Horikita Suzune decided to play dumb.

She wouldn't remind Nagumo proactively.

"Heh, what if this stranger has the ability to resolve your current situation?"

Nagumo smiled without warmth. "Horikita-senpai younger sister actually being a student in Class D—it would sound terrible if word got out. As a friend of Horikita-senpai, isn't it natural for me to want to help you?"

"By 'helping,' do you mean having Class D vote for you in the upcoming Student Council election?"

Horikita Suzune's eyes held a trace of mockery. "Your promise is merely to help us defeat Class A. I can't trust such an empty promise."

This guy wasn't even willing to offer Personal Points—what was there to believe?

Nagumo said indifferently, "Before calling it an empty promise, consider the recent training camp exam and the previous sports festival. There will be more inter-grade joint exams next academic year. Don't you want an ally?"

"But I've heard the entire second year is opposing you."

Horikita Suzune pointed out his recent troubles without holding back.

Nagumo chuckled, utterly unconcerned. "If you looked into it properly, you'd find these voices have existed since last year. But they have no impact on my rule—they're just a bunch of flies."

He bet that Horikita Suzune didn't know the details of the second-year situation and had only heard some rumors.

Those unaware of the inside story could easily be deceived by him.

After all, opposition to him had always existed, yet two years had passed, and his position remained unchanged.

Unfortunately, Horikita Suzune knew that while Nagumo appeared prosperous on the surface, he was actually in a precarious position.

Since the second year had terminated his contract, his standing was already on shaky ground.

"Impossible." Horikita Suzune's voice was cold and clear. "Our first target is Class C. If you have a way to defeat Class C, I might consider cooperating with you."

Nagumo's expression shifted uncertainly.

Truthfully, he also wanted to abandon Ryuen—this guy had extorted too much of his Personal points, becoming unsustainable to maintain.

However, Ryuen was currently the only first-year he had managed to recruit.

Horikita Suzune's side seemed somewhat unstable, especially since they had scored zero twice, which in his view made them utterly worthless.

He merely wanted to pull Class D into the fray as cannon fodder, hence his attempt to persuade Horikita Suzune with empty promises.

He had initially thought Horikita Suzune would take the bait—after all, as Horikita Manabu's sister, she must harbor some resentment.

Unexpectedly, she remained completely unfazed, reacting with remarkable calmness.

Nagumo's eyes gleamed.

'Forget it,' he thought.

He didn't necessarily need Horikita Suzune's cooperation.

After all, he had already tricked Sudo onto his side. Having a few pawns was sufficient.

"Heh, I'll wait for the day you regret this."

Nagumo maintained his smile, feeling no urgency.

As long as Horikita Suzune had ambitions, she would eventually realize that relying on her own strength alone would never get her close to Kaoru.

Intelligent people seek external assistance.

He believed Horikita Suzune would eventually understand this truth—it was she who needed him, not the other way around.

"I'll watch as you meet your downfall."

Horikita Suzune retorted with equal sharpness before standing up and leaving.

Once her figure vanished, Nagumo's expression instantly darkened.

He thought of Kaoru—the dismissive tone toward seniors, even the assumption that he would soon step down, filled him with visceral disgust and rage.

His earlier intention to cooperate with Horikita Suzune evaporated instantly.

Nagumo decided to make her regret this for life.

Nagumo let out a long, heavy sigh. Though deeply unwilling, he admitted that without Class D's assistance, he was destined to lose.

Because the one with the Overwhelming advantage wasn't him.

He had always been the one dominating others—never had others dominated him.

Kaoru hadn't miscalculated.

Nagumo was indeed in a precarious position.

Originally possessing over twenty million Personal points, repeated expenditures since winter break had evaporated more than half.

Nagumo now had only about nine million left.

If it were just troubles from the second-year students, he wouldn't have fallen to such a state.

But Horikita Manabu was about to graduate!

Unable to restrain himself, Nagumo had teamed up with Ishikura Takato from Class B of the third year, providing him with several million in support to discuss how to pull Horikita Manabu down from Class A.

This graduation exam was his final chance.

If not for Kaoru, he would have gladly faced Horikita Manabu in a proper showdown.

But now, Nagumo knew his delusions were just that—delusions.

He had heard that Kaoru had privately given Horikita Manabu five million Personal points.

'Damn it,' he thought. 'That guy seems even richer than me. Did he not exhaust his Personal points back then?'

Nagumo gritted his teeth in fury, especially upon hearing that Asahina Nazuna had brought Kaoru into her room.

They might have even tried every position imaginable.

'That bastard! How dare he lay a hand on what's mine!'

Though seething with rage internally, Nagumo Miyabi maintained a facade of calm composure.

His attitude toward Asahina Nazuna in class remained unchanged, hoping she would recognize Kaoru's true nature and return to his embrace.

As for how to deal with Kaoru, he had temporarily run out of options.

With Horikita Suzune refusing to take the bait, Class 1-D likely wouldn't vote for him.

Even with Ishikura Takato and Ryuen Kakeru's support, their combined votes probably couldn't surpass Kaoru's.

Nagumo clearly understood that even if he could buy votes from Class 2-D and Class 3-D, he still stood no chance of winning.

'Damn it! Just one more class would have been enough!'

Despite his fury, rational consideration led Nagumo to prepare himself to abandon the Student Council.

Even if he forcibly remained in the Student Council, what could he accomplish besides expelling Kaoru and others?

Moreover, this situation arose partly due to Kaoru's infiltration of his faction, but surprisingly, the school had also taken Kaoru's side.

Nagumo couldn't comprehend why the school would meddle in student affairs without good reason.

If not for the school's intervention, this election wouldn't have happened at all.

He could have continued pretending everything was fine and remained as president through the next academic year.

He had no choice but to give up.

That damned bastard!

Nagumo considered overturning the table entirely, staking everything on one final gamble—either Kaoru would be expelled, or he would be.

Only through such extreme measures could he wash away the shame staining him.

He somewhat suspected Kaoru might be eyeing his Personal points, waiting until they were depleted to force his expulsion.

But even if that were true, Nagumo now had less than ten million points.

If this continued, he might truly face expulsion next time.

His only hope lay in the reforms planned for the next academic year.

Even after stepping down, the school would attempt to revise some rules.

After all, with the same outcomes repeating year after year, the financial backers behind the scenes were growing weary.

Chapter 609: Exposed Identity

March 20th, Friday.

The election held no suspense.

Kaoru secured first place with 217 votes, while Nagumo Miyabi came in second with 140 votes.

Surprisingly, Ichinose Honami ranked third with 48 votes.

Although Kaoru had appeared confident beforehand, he knew this victory was tainted—he had secured votes from third-year students before Horikita Manabu and others graduated.

Had the school prohibited third-years from voting or postponed the election to the next academic year, Kaoru might not have won so easily.

Everyone knew Nagumo's era was ending, yet he still managed 140 votes, demonstrating his formidable original influence.

Now, however, it could only be seen as a desperate struggle.

This outcome shattered certain traditions—it was the first time a former Student Council president had been ousted, and the first time a first-year student became Student Council president.

Due to the abrupt leadership change, the school arranged for Kaoru to deliver his inaugural speech during the graduation ceremony, which would also mark Nagumo's official departure.

"Heh, congratulations, new president."

In the Student Council office, Nagumo offered sarcastic applause. "You must have spent quite a lot to achieve this, didn't you?"

Ichinose Honami's eyebrows furrowed as she prepared to retort, but she heard Kaoru begin clapping as well.

"Actually, it is I who should congratulate you, Nagumo-senpai." Kaoru looked deeply moved.

"Because of a minor mistake I made, everyone started criticizing the Student Council. Our senior couldn't bear to involve us and chose to step down despite being at the peak of their career. Otherwise, I wouldn't have become the president. I'm truly grateful for our senior's guidance."

Nagumo was fuming with rage.

'How dare he pin all the blame on me? Everyone knew the controversy targeting me was fueled by his instigation!'

"Heh, I don't deserve to be called your senior. I wonder how many people outside are curious about how you plan to turn the Student Council into your personal Harem..."

As he spoke, Nagumo grew increasingly agitated.

He thought of his childhood friend, who had probably long been pleasuring herself beneath Kaoru, showing expressions she had never revealed in front of him.

"Let me tell you, even if I handed the Student Council over to you, I wouldn't care!"

Nagumo dropped all pretense. "This world has always been about who has the bigger fist. As long as you don't knock me out with one punch, just wait for me to knock you out with mine!"

At these words, Katsuragi, Tonokawa, Kiriya and the others looked astonished.

"Senpai, you're getting worked up." Kaoru blinked.

He hadn't expected the other party to lose composure first.

"Me? Worked up?"

Nagumo's veins bulged. "Don't think I don't know what you did to Nazuna. You're deliberately provoking me! You can't find an opportunity, so you're trying to force me to make a move!"

Kaoru looked at him puzzled and asked, "What does it have to do with you if I confess to my senpai?"

Nagumo Miyabi felt his head buzzing.

What did he mean by 'his senior'? She was his childhood friend, his possession!

At that moment, he suddenly understood how some people felt.

So this was the pain of being cuckolded?

Perhaps because he had been suppressing his feelings for so long, Nagumo Miyabi's face twisted with emotion, causing his rationality to evaporate.

The person before him wore an expression that seemed to mock him.

"When you were getting intimate with others, you never considered your senior's feelings. Now that your senpai is about to get intimate with someone else, you're acting like your mother just died."

The reactions of those around were peculiar, likely because they hadn't expected Kaoru to use such vulgar language.

"You understand nothing!"

Nagumo Miyabi shouted. "Nazuna should be mine! No matter what I do, she should stay by my side, support me, help me. Even if I want to play with hundreds of women, she should obey unconditionally!"

Kaoru smiled faintly. "So, she isn't your possession."

Nagumo found his face utterly detestable.

How could this guy, who already had several women himself, have the right to point fingers at him?

"Hehehe, if you saw Ichinose with another man, would you be this magnanimous too?"

Faced with Nagumo's sneer, before Kaoru could respond, Ichinose Honami felt bewildered.

"Why would I be with someone else?"

Nagumo was taken aback, then nearly laughed in anger.

He pointed repeatedly at Kaoru and Ichinose Honami but couldn't utter a word. This reaction made Ichinose Honami a bit scared.

"Hey, Nagumo-kun, don't make such a scene."

Kiriyama stepped in cheerfully to mediate. "Think about it—he only got the position of president. You still have Class A!"

Nagumo Miyabi felt his vision darken.

What he had lost wasn't just the presidency! This bastard was subtly mocking him!

"Get out! Leave my office!" Nagumo Miyabi pointed at the door.

He was still the president, after all.

Kaoru didn't mind. He took Ichinose Honami's hand and left the office. He didn't want to see Nagumo Miyabi any longer.

Nagumo Miyabi stared at his retreating figure, especially at the sight of him holding Ichinose Honami's small hand, as if he were seeing his own Asahina Nazuna.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

After a bout of rage, Nagumo Miyabi tremblingly pulled out his phone.

[Nazuna, I believe you will definitely return to my side.]

After sending it, it was quickly marked as read.

[What are you planning to do to Kaoru-kun?]

[I've told you several times already—I know you can't accept it, but I've truly accepted him.]

[Kaoru-kun is my boyfriend now.]

[For the sake of our childhood friendship, please stop this. I'm scared.]

Reading these words, Nagumo's head buzzed.

His vision blurred, and he felt as if he might collapse at any moment.

This can't be real. It must be an illusion. His Nazuna would stand firmly by his side no matter what happened.

...

Meanwhile, on the way back, just as Kaoru was about to say something to Ichinose Honami, someone unexpectedly called him.

"What? Ryuen plans to drug Class D!?"

As soon as he answered, Kaoru heard shocking news.

Ichinose Honami, standing beside him, also turned her head, her eyes filled with astonishment.

"Yes! He wants us to find an opportunity to slip laxatives into Class D's food!"

Manabe Shiho whispered, "He said it has a delayed effect—it will take effect after 48 hours, so Class D students will be absent on exam day!"

After the initial shock, Kaoru regained his composure.

He could only say, typical of Ryuen, always resorting to underhanded tactics.

No wonder he had people tailing and harassing Class D of the first year. It wasn't just about gathering information—he also planned to take down a few students.

"Where are you?" Kaoru was cautious.

He could tell Manabe Shiho was suppressing her voice, as if afraid someone might discover her.

"I'm in the restroom."

Manabe Shiho had just received Ryuen Kakeru's task and immediately reported this emergency to Kaoru.

"Is Ryuen there?"

Kaoru paused, then quickly corrected himself. "Hang up, delete our call history, delete your Alt account too—anything related to me, delete it all! And tell Saki and the others to do the same!"

Although he had previously instructed Manabe Shiho and the others to hide their identities and minimize contact after learning about Iijima Ryota's exposure, and even deleted the main account's contact information, these minor delinquents seemed to lack counter-espionage awareness.

Kaoru already sensed something unusual. At this point, he didn't even think of blaming Manabe Shiho.

His first reaction was to have the minor delinquents go into hiding.

If anything went wrong, the responsibility would undoubtedly fall on him.

These minor delinquents only knew how to bully others, their minds filled with seducing their master and fighting.

How could they possibly sense something amiss?

"Huh?"

As expected, Manabe Shiho didn't catch on.

She thought it was normal for her to use the restroom since Ryuen had already dismissed everyone.

At most, she could delete the call history later.

Could Ryuen really discover anything?

However, since it was her master's command, Manabe Shiho had no choice but to obediently comply.

"If you need to find me in the future, try to come after 12 at night."

After saying this, Kaoru immediately hung up. He knew why the girl had urgently reported to him.

Manabe Shiho was too eager to prove her worth.

It wasn't that it wasn't acceptable—it was just too rushed.

Kaoru remained calm, unhurriedly putting away his phone.

"What happened?"

Ichinose Honami finally had a chance to speak.

Kaoru briefly explained the situation to her. After hearing it, the girl's pretty face was filled with anger.

"How can they do this! It's against the rules—intentionally harming classmates!"

Ichinose Honami was furious.

Always righteous, she didn't hesitate. "I'm going to find Ryuen-kun. He must explain himself to everyone!"

Kaoru grabbed the girl's wrist and calmly said, "Let me handle this. Something feels off."

"What's off?"

Ichinose Honami detested this kind of behavior.

"I thought Ryuen-kun had at least some bottom line, but I never expected he would go this far."

Kaoru shook his head. "I feel like he's trying to test me. Let's discuss this when we get back."

Ichinose Honami frowned, but in this regard, she trusted her boyfriend's judgment. So she didn't argue and simply went back with him.

The two quickly returned to the dorm.

Seeing the empty room, Kaoru felt somewhat unaccustomed.

Ever since he had taken out his own chewing gum, Karuizawa and Kushida had inexplicably become well-behaved, only occasionally muttering something about Cream Puffs.

However, before Kaoru could calmly ponder what Ryuen was planning this time, he soon received a message from an unfamiliar number.

[I accidentally exposed myself!]

Kaoru picked up his phone, his expression shifting slightly.

Perhaps thinking he had seen the message, the other party quickly sent another.

[They want to capture Rika.]..]

It was followed by some garbled text, likely from accidentally pressing the keyboard.

"What does this mean?"

Ichinose Honami leaned over and saw the message. "It seems to be Manabe-san's account."

"Let's stay put and not act."

Kaoru didn't reply because this message was sent to his main account.

He usually only contacted Manabe Shiho through his Alt account, not his school account.

[Want to meet up?]

This time, it was a leisurely message—not in Manabe Shiho's tone.

It was probably Ryuen.

Ichinose Honami looked at Kaoru, who thought for a moment before blocking the account.

"Huh? Won't that cause problems? It seems Manabe-san has been caught?"

"It's fine. Let's see how they react."

After a while, someone else sent Kaoru another message.

[Help! Ryuen caught me!]

Kaoru blocked the account again, now feeling more assured.

Several minutes passed, and he received another message, this time via email.

[Kaoru, I know it's you. You'd better come see me.]

This time, Kaoru didn't block it.

Instead, he replied.

[Ibuki, stop harassing me. Don't worry—I won't expose what happened between us.]

After sending it, Kaoru blocked the other party and quietly waited for further messages.

Half an hour passed, and no one sent him any more messages.

It seemed the crisis was over.

Ichinose Honami and Kaoru exchanged glances.

The latter's eyes gleamed—he suspected Ryuen was fishing.

He believed Manabe Shiho and the others had definitely deleted all records.

His orders couldn't possibly go unexecuted. Even if Ryuen caught Manabe Shiho and took her phone, the other party wouldn't find any evidence.

The only possible exposure now was the recent phone call.

As long as Ryuen didn't hear it or see the call history, he could only remain suspicious.

However, considering Ryuen's tendency to use underhanded methods, Kaoru decided to call Ayanokoji and ask him to take a walk around the school building.

Since Manabe Shiho said she was in the restroom earlier, she likely hadn't left the school building.

It was a good opportunity to send an unrelated person to check the situation.

If anything happened, it would be perfectly reasonable for a passerby to call the police or something.

Right after making the call, Kaoru remembered there were surveillance cameras in the school building.

He quickly called Mashima Tomonari and asked him to keep an eye on the footage.

He initially wanted to contact Shiina Hiyori but restrained himself.

Anyone could step forward—except him.

Showing up now would confirm Manabe Shiho's suspicions.

After he finished all this, Ichinose Honami seemed to understand his thoughts.

"Is Ryuen-kun suspecting that Manabe-san is your plant?"

"Yes, not just Manabe—probably the entire class is under suspicion."

"Why?"

Kaoru hesitated for a moment, then told Ichinose Honami about Iijima Ryota and the others.

"You all... it's so complicated."

Ichinose Honami seemed shocked that students could engage in espionage and counter-espionage—more complex than girls fighting.

"Probably the incident with Nagumo made Ryuen suspicious, worried that I might have planted spies in Class C."

Kaoru said, "So, not long ago, I had them delete my contact information and not keep any chat records."

Ichinose Honami looked at Kaoru with admiration, like a little fangirl, and asked in a casual tone.

"So, is Manabe-san really your person?"

Kaoru looked away. She held his hands with both of hers, her eyes sparkling.

"Come on, tell me! What exactly happened between you and her? I'm so curious!"

Chapter 610: Huh?

"He's lying!"

Seeing Kaoru's reply, Ibuki Mio was furious.

What did he mean by 'expose what happened between us'?!

As if she had some shady secret with him!

"Hey, can you give me back my phone now?"

Manabe Shiho breathed a sigh of relief internally but pretended to be displeased on the surface.

Ryuen frowned slightly.

How strange—Kaoru hadn't taken the bait. Did he not care about Manabe Shiho's safety?

"Why should I return it to you?" Ibuki Mio scrutinized her. "You still haven't given us a reason for the questions we asked earlier."

Manabe Shiho had always disliked this tomboy and retorted, "Do I need to report to you when I use the restroom?"

"I heard you talking on the phone."

Ibuki Mio remained expressionless.

She had been watching everyone, and now Manabe Shiho was the most suspicious.

Manabe Shiho gritted her teeth.

She hadn't expected Ibuki and Ryuen, who had already left, to double back.

If it weren't for Yamashita Saki and Yabu Naemi keeping watch outside, she would have been caught by Ibuki Mio immediately.

"On the phone?" Manabe Shiho naturally denied it firmly. "Is it possible I was just watching TikTok videos?"

Yamashita Saki chimed in, "You must have misheard. If Shiho-chan was on the phone, how could we not have heard or seen it?"

"Ibuki-san, please don't treat us with personal bias." Yabu Naemi spoke softly and gently.

With her glasses, she appeared particularly meek.

Ibuki Mio snorted coldly.

She knew these minor delinquents were in cahoots—they would definitely cover for each other.

"Ryuen-kun, if she can label me a spy based on one sentence, can I also consider her a spy?"

Manabe Shiho began sarcastically. "After all, Mitoma-kun's first reaction was about Ibuki-san. The two of them might be hiding some secret from us."

"You!"

Ibuki Mio couldn't stand anyone mentioning Kaoru now.

Whenever she remembered, her ass would ache.

At that moment, Ryuen spoke up.

"Alright, alright, stop arguing."

He nonchalantly tossed the phone back to Manabe Shiho. "Let's call it a day for now. Head back early."

Manabe Shiho caught the phone and breathed a sigh of relief, as if she had safely passed the test.

Although somewhat unwilling, Ibuki Mio knew Ryuen was the type who wouldn't let go once he bit his opponent.

Letting Manabe Shiho go now might mean he truly hadn't found anything suspicious.

Could she have really misheard?

Ibuki Mio began to waver.

"Really, next time, could you not eavesdrop on people in the restroom?"

Manabe Shiho showed a somewhat smug expression.

She really disliked Ibuki Mio.

"I hope you'll use your brain in the future and not resort to violence at every turn."

Ibuki Mio's face flushed red with anger, but she forcibly suppressed the urge to punch her.

Seeing this, Manabe Shiho felt even better.

With a smile, she was about to leave with Yabu Naemi and Yamashita Saki.

Suddenly, Ryuen said, "Wait, take out the laxative."

Manabe Shiho's slightly tense body relaxed.

She took out the laxative, confused. "Are we canceling the mission?"

"Heh, of course not. As compensation for suspecting you earlier, you deserve a laxative with better effects."

Though feeling strange, Manabe Shiho and the others accepted the new drug that Ryuen claimed was more effective.

After they left, Ryuen smiled.

"Tell the others to stand down. Hand the mission over to them."

Ibuki Mio was taken aback, somewhat puzzled.

"They might not be able to complete the task, right?"

"Stop talking nonsense. What I say goes. Let them handle it. Remember to withdraw the others but don't tell them—keep it from them."

At the end, Ryuen revealed a smile as if he had discovered prey.

Who was he kidding? Would he let Manabe Shiho off?

He only believed in 'guilty until proven innocent.'

Who cared about the details? If he suspected you, you were suspicious!

Faced with his fishing attempt, Kaoru hadn't taken the bait, which only fueled Ryuen's competitive spirit.

He really wanted to see if there were spies in his class.

If Kaoru received the message, he would definitely try to stop the drugging—either by warning Class D of the first year in advance or by pretending to be a passerby who accidentally discovered evidence of drugging.

Ryuen decided to let the suspected Manabe Shiho and the others carry out the mission.

He wanted to see how Kaoru would respond.

If Kaoru didn't intervene, it would prove Manabe Shiho and the others weren't suspicious, especially since he had already called off the others.

This way, either Kaoru had no knowledge at all, or the suspicion lay with someone else.

But—

If Kaoru intervened, it would be confirmed: Manabe Shiho was indeed the informant!

Because Manabe Shiho didn't know Ryuen had already called off the others, she would continue acting and send Kaoru a false signal.

As soon as Kaoru intervened, he would immediately discover the carefully prepared gift from Ryuen.

Salt.

Yes, the laxative Ryuen Kakeru had just given them was actually salt.

Since it looked similar to the original laxative, they shouldn't suspect anything, let alone taste it themselves.

Kaoru wanted to prevent Class D of the first year from ingesting the laxative, especially his women.

He would try to intervene before the drugging occurred.

And just as he intervened—the laxative would turn out to be salt.

Just thinking about Kaoru's expression made Ryuen excited.

He couldn't wait to see Kaoru embarrassed.

Ibuki Mio didn't know why he was so happy but could vaguely guess he hadn't given up on targeting Kaoru.

However, the girl felt somewhat conflicted.

"Without the laxative, how do we deal with Class D?"

"Heh, you're worrying too much."

Ryuen didn't care. "Ibuki, they're just trash. What's there to worry about?"

Ibuki Mio rolled her eyes at him.

What capabilities did their class have? Wasn't he the one who knew best?

Ryuen knew what she was thinking but just smiled it off. He had already figured out whom to bribe.

It's just Class D.

We'll win.

...

The next morning, in the Student Council office.

Faced with the anger of Kushida, Horikita, Sudo and others—with Chabashira Sae and Sakagami Kazuma standing nearby—Ryuen's smile froze.

"What exactly is this?"

Kaoru, representing the Student Council, placed a packet of white substance in front of him, glaringly conspicuous.

"It wasn't me!" Ishizaki Daichi spoke up first, loudly exclaiming, "I didn't do anything! Someone is framing me!"

"Nonsense! Everyone saw you putting something in Kushida's cup!"

Sudo was even louder, glaring furiously. "You beast! How dare you drug a girl!"

Hearing this, Kushida quickly pretended to shed tears, appearing pitiable.

"Wahh... Ishizaki-kun, I trusted you so much... wahh..."

'Huh?'

'What happened?'