

Cote 72

Chapter 72: Everything Needs Evidence

To calm things down, Kaoru Mitoma immediately moved the people involved to the library meeting room. Hardly anyone ever used this place.

Before long, Horikita Manabu and Tachibana Akane appeared in front of everyone.

"What's going on, Mitoma?"

Normally, a dispute between a few students wouldn't be enough to warrant the student council president personal attention—it would usually be handled by Tachibana Akane, the secretary. But since it was Kaoru Mitoma who called for help, Horikita Manabu had no choice but to put aside his work and hurry over.

In front of everyone, Kaoru Mitoma quickly reported the whole situation to Horikita Manabu, then added,

"I've already contacted the library staff. They're pulling up the security footage now." Horikita Manabu was quite satisfied.

Handling an unexpected situation so smoothly, as if he'd been through this a hundred times before—there was nothing to criticize.

"You did well."

After a brief word of praise, Horikita Manabu turned his attention to Manabe Shiho and the others. Faced with his gaze, the students from Class C flinched for a moment, but soon regained their composure.

"Senpai, I want to know how the student council plans to deal with this thief." Manabe Shiho spoke up immediately, determined to pin the blame on Amikura Mako and have the incident officially labeled as theft.

"I'm not a thief! I have no idea how this thing ended up in my bag!"

Amikura Mako couldn't help but shout back, her eyes brimming with tears of anger and frustration.

"Heh, only a guilty thief would say that."

Manabe Shiho glared at her, her stare so fierce it was intimidating.

Amikura Mako bit her lip, furious at Shiho words, but also starting to doubt herself. She was sure she'd never even seen this bracelet before.

"Quiet, I need to confirm a few things."

Horikita Manabu spoke up.

"First, whose bracelet is this?"

"Of course it's mine!"

Manabe Shiho snapped, as if it was the dumbest question ever. But Horikita Manabu just turned to Amikura Mako.

"You, are you sure you've never bought or owned a bracelet like this?"

Amikura Mako shook her head.

"No, this is the first time I've ever seen it."

"When did you first notice the bracelet was missing?"

"I only remembered a little while ago. I think I took it off at the library around noon today and forgot to bring it back."

Manabe Shiho answered smoothly, without a hint of hesitation. But if you looked closely, you could see her eyes darting, unable to meet Horikita Manabu gaze.

"Why did you take it off?" Horikita Manabu continued to ask.

"Because wearing the bracelet while studying was a bit of a hassle." Manabe Shiho seemed to have expected this question from him.

"You realized your bracelet was missing, then went back to the library and happened to see someone sitting in your original seat, but you couldn't see your bracelet, so you checked these students' bags, and finally found the bracelet."

Horikita Manabu paused.

"That's how it all happened, right?"

"Yeah, that's it. For someone who tries to take someone else property and then tries to get away with it, I think the student council should make a fair judgment."

Manabe Shiho rattled off her explanation in one breath, as if she'd memorized it word for word many times.

"Taking a classmate's property—this really can't be ignored. It sets a bad example for others, and I'm sure the school would be embarrassed by it too."

Hearing Horikita Manabu say this, Amikura Mako face went pale, while Manabe Shiho flashed a confident, victorious smile.

"Wait, President, I don't think Mako-chan is that kind of person."

Ichinose Honami finally spoke up to explain.

"We were all studying together today. If Mako-chan had taken her bracelet, there's no way we wouldn't have noticed."

"Ichinose, don't get involved for now."

Horikita Manabu dismissed her words coolly. At a time like this, as a student council officer and a classmate of the person involved, she really should avoid getting involved.

"But it's hard for me to accept something like this without any evidence!" Ichinose Honami tried her best to keep her emotions in check. She knew very well that Amikura Mako couldn't possibly have taken Manabe Shiho bracelet.

"Don't worry, Ichinose. We'll all watch the security footage together in a bit and find out."

Kaoru watched the girl expression with interest. Even though she still had some psychological scars, she gritted her teeth and stood up for her classmates.

"Everything needs evidence. Whatever the facts are, that's what the student council decision will be."

As he spoke, Horikita Manabu glanced indifferently at Manabe Shiho.

Manabe Shiho looked a little uneasy, and the people around her were fidgeting as well. Ichinose Honami wanted to say something else, but Amikura Mako beside her grabbed her arm. It was an instinctive move, and you could see the nervousness and anxiety in her eyes.

Ichinose took a deep breath, then reached out and patted Amikura Mako head like she was comforting a little sister, giving the anxious girl a reassuring smile. No matter what was going on, Ichinose Honami was willing to trust her classmates.

Even though they'd only been together for less than two months, she could feel what everyone was like inside. There was no way there was a thief, and no one would do something bad. In the whole class, maybe she was the only bad person.

It seemed that Amikura Mako relaxed quite a bit after noticing Ichinose Honami mood, because she was sure she had never taken any bracelet, hadn't even seen one. As long as everyone saw the surveillance footage, this misunderstanding should clear up.

Even now, Amikura Mako was still holding onto this optimistic thought. But sometimes, the facts aren't always the truth. After a bit of time, the librarian finally pulled up today surveillance footage and projected it onto the screen in the meeting room.

Because the camera was in a rather out-of-the-way spot, all you could see was Manabe Shiho and the others studying together, but not a clearer view. In the footage, Manabe Shiho was indeed wearing a sparkling bracelet, but later she took it off and set it aside, right where it blocked the camera view.

Once lunch break was over, they packed up and left, and that sparkling bracelet mysteriously disappeared. Next was the time when the library was empty, so the librarian helped skip ahead to the footage from just now, showing Manabe Shiho and the others returning to the library, saying they wanted to search the people from Class B.

This is the most crucial part. Because the facts that follow will leave Class B with no room to argue. Manabe Shiho didn't get her hands dirty herself. Instead, she had Class B investigate themselves, and in the end, no one expected to find that bracelet in Amikura Mako bag.

"Heh, that's how it is. Nothing left to say now, huh, Class B little thief." Seeing the dazed look on Amikura Mako face, Manabe Shiho almost burst out laughing.

"That's not right! The video didn't show Mako-chan taking the bracelet at all, so it doesn't prove anything!" Ichinose Honami still tried to defend her.

"But how do you explain my bracelet ending up in her bag?" Manabe Shiho scoffed.

"Maybe she's a repeat offender, found the bracelet before you guys did, and secretly hid it away."
Ichinose Honami fell silent.

Suddenly, she realized something and instinctively looked up at Kaoru Mitoma.

Surprisingly, the other person didn't even look at her, instead he is teasing the third-year senpai,
Tachibana Akane.