

Cote 80

Chapter 80: Unnecessary Kindness

"What's that supposed to mean?" Kanzaki Ryuji frowned hard. Not being able to intimidate this girl right away gave him a really bad feeling.

"Only idiots think everyone else is an idiot." Ibuki Mio lifted her chin arrogantly.

"Don't think I haven't seen through your little tricks. If you really had something on me, why haven't you gone straight to the student council?"

"We wanted to give you a chance to make things right. We don't want to see anyone get hurt." Ichinose Honami answered immediately.

"Just like the rumors say, this kind of pointless kindness is completely meaningless."

Ibuki Mio seemed to let out a mocking laugh.

"So, you're pretty confident in your methods?" Kanzaki Ryuji stared at her.

"You're a hundred percent sure you could dodge all the surveillance, take the bracelet, and put it in Amikura bag?"

"Looks like I underestimated you. Are you trying to trick me into admitting it?"

As soon as she finished speaking, Ichinose Honami expression changed, and even Kanzaki Ryuji couldn't help but let out a deep sigh.

There was really nothing they could do now. This girl not only had nerves of steel, but she was also extremely cautious. Kanzaki Ryuji hadn't really expected to scare Ibuki Mio into confessing, so he'd secretly prepared a recorder, hoping he could get her to admit it.

That's why, to avoid tipping her off, only he and Ichinose Honami had come to confront her. But it turned out she wasn't falling for it at all.

"This is so boring. I'm going back. Don't get in my way." Just as she passed by Ichinose Honami, the latter suddenly grabbed her wrist, making her frown slightly.

"Why..."

"What?" Ibuki Mio didn't catch what Ichinose Honami said—the voice was a little too quiet—but then she saw Ichinose Honami suddenly look up at her, eyes filled with unmistakable sadness and pain.

"Why would you do something like this?"

"Are you about to beg me now?"

"I know very well that we're rivals, that our classes are on opposing sides, but to go this far... Don't you feel even a little guilty?" As she spoke, Ichinose Honami forced out a trembling smile.

"I also plan to move up to Class A. I want to work hard together with everyone in Class B, but it's not for the sake of Class A privileges. I just want to share the joy and sorrow of working hard together with everyone."

"Even if I can't make it to Class A by graduation, that's fine. As long as everyone can graduate happily, and when we look back on our lives we have no regrets, I think that's enough."

"Honestly, I can understand how you in Class C feel about Class A. Before school started, a lot of people probably came here for the sake of getting into a good university or landing a good job, right? It's totally normal to feel frustrated when you find out those benefits are tied only to Class A."

"But... but, there are more ways to get into Class A than just that, right? Besides the people in your own class, there must be people who want to make friends with students from other classes too, right?"

Ibuki Mio silently stared at Ichinose Honami, listening to her voice grow more and more shaky and rushed, then pried her hand away.

"Telling me all this is pointless. I'm just following that guy orders."

Ichinose Honami lowered her eyes, making it impossible to see what kind of expression she had.

"Besides, I don't really have any friends," Ibuki Mio looked away.

"I'm usually alone. I just don't feel like I fit in with everyone."

With that, she immediately left. Kanzaki Ryuji hesitated for a moment, but before he could say anything, Ichinose Honami looked up and put on a smile again.

"Sorry, I got a bit flustered just now. I can't give up just because of a little setback. I have to keep working hard from here on out!"

After saying that, Ichinose Honami patted her own cheeks, as if telling herself to stay awake and calm.

Kanzaki Ryuji eyes were complicated. He was actually more worried that this leader might not recover from the blow, since she had been acting a bit off earlier.

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Amikura Mako was feeling a bit down.

Even though Kanzaki Ryuji and Ichinose Honami both told the forum that the student council hadn't released any results yet, and that everything being said was just rumors and slander, and that they might consider suing those spreading the rumors for defamation— All the malice that needed to be seen had already been seen.

Not just the first-years—even the upperclassmen joined in, all making fun of her with mocking laughter.

Some even complained, wondering how someone like that could end up in Class B. Turning down her friends' offer to walk with her, Amikura Mako decided to head back to the dorm alone and calm herself down.

But as soon as she reached the first floor of the school building, she spotted Kaoru Mitoma standing near the shoe lockers by the entrance.

"You don't look so good." Mako froze for a moment before realizing he was talking to her. She tried to force a smile out of habit, but it felt too fake, so she just stayed silent.

"You can buy a lot of things with personal points. If you're upset, I can help you catch those anonymous bastards and make them kneel and apologize to you."

"... So even you know about it."

"It'd be harder not to know, wouldn't it?"

Under his gaze, Mako walked over to her shoe locker to change out of her indoor shoes.

"Want me to keep you company for a bit?" Kaoru watched as the girl bent down slightly, slipping off her indoor shoes and revealing a pair of clean, petite feet. Even wrapped in black stockings, a hint of soft pink skin showed through.

"Usually, it's the person being comforted who says something like that, right?" Amikura Mako hands paused, and she pressed her lips together.

"Normally, it's the one hitting on someone who says that." Kaoru replied, "I want to try the new item at the café. I heard they've got a new dessert set, but I'm too shy to go alone. I was hoping you could come with me."

"Wouldn't being with me right now just cause you trouble?" Amikura Mako hesitated.

"When you don't know what to do, it's not a bad idea to eat something good with a stranger. And I'm buying." Kaoru told her seriously,

"You can totally rip me off for a bunch of personal points right now, so don't hold back." Mako was a bit at a loss, never having encountered this kind of pickup line before.

Paired with Kaoru gaze, she found it strangely hard to turn him down.

"If you're annoyed, I can say something dirty to you, and then you can throw your coffee in my face in front of everyone and really let off some steam." Kaoru watched as she put on her little leather shoes.

Her long, straight legs were only covered by knee-high black socks, and the absolute territory beneath her skirt was strikingly white, making it hard not to want to reach out and touch.

"Why are you talking to me like that?" Amikura Mako stared at him, her tone faint.

"It really sounds like something a shady guy would say. It's weird."

What was even weirder was that she actually felt a little tempted, a bit of excitement stirring inside her.