

## Cote 90

### Chapter 90: Midterm Exams

It had been roughly two weeks since the study group was initiated.

With the help of Horikita Suzune, the study efficiency of Sudou Ken and others had significantly improved. Barring any unforeseen circumstances, they should be able to pass the midterm exams without much trouble.

Unfortunately, Chabashira Sae suddenly informed them that the exam scope had been changed, rendering all their previous focus points useless. Although the new exam scope had been covered in class, it wasn't the main focus of their study sessions initially, catching everyone off guard. Horikita Suzune didn't voice her frustration, but she was probably cursing inwardly.

This could be inferred from her tutoring of Sudou Ken today.

Ayanokouji Kiyotaka noticed that she had become even more sarcastic than before. However, perhaps sensing Horikita Suzune's consistent dedication, Sudou Ken managed to endure it, which somewhat surprised Ayanokouji Kiyotaka.

Even so, the sudden change in the exam scope still brought considerable psychological pressure. It was possible that someone might drop out because of this.

Thinking of this, Ayanokouji Kiyotaka decided to take action during lunch break.

"Ayanokouji-kun, where are you planning to go?" Kushida Kikyou was the first to notice his movement.

"I'm thinking of going to the cafeteria to eat."

"Eh, don't you usually invite Horikita-san along?"

"She's never agreed before."

"That's true. I've hardly ever seen Horikita-san accept anyone's invitation." Kushida Kikyou sighed deeply. "It's so hard to get along with her. It's really frustrating."

As she spoke, she chuckled to herself. "But, Horikita-san has been working hard to tutor Sudou-kun and the others recently. For some reason, I feel a bit more at ease."

Ayanokouji Kiyotaka checked the time and reminded her, "If we don't go to the cafeteria soon, we might miss out on the meal set we want."

"Ah, sorry, I've taken up too much of your time!" Kushida Kikyou looked apologetic, then hesitated.

"Um, can I come along too?"

'I was waiting for you anyway'

Ayanokouji Kiyotaka thought to himself, but he nodded in agreement.

The two of them made their way to the cafeteria.

Faced with the array of meal sets, Ayanokouji Kiyotaka didn't rush to order but instead quietly observed the students around them.

"Ayanokouji-kun?" Kushida Kikyou found it strange.

"What I'm about to do, I hope you can keep it a secret for me" Ayanokouji Kiyotaka suddenly said.

"Eh?"

Under her surprised gaze, Ayanokouji Kiyotaka inexplicably approached a senior student.

"Excuse me, what grade are you in?"

"Third year, but what's it to you?"

"There's a small matter I'd like to discuss with you. I'll pay you a certain amount for your help."

The third-year senior fell silent.

"Do you have the midterm exam questions and answers from the first semester two years ago? I'd like to buy them."

Upon hearing Ayanokouji Kiyotaka's words, Kushida Kikyou showed a look of astonishment.

"...How much can you offer?"

"Ten thousand personal points."

"No, that's too little. To help you find this exam paper, I'll need to ask someone for a favor. At least thirty thousand personal points."

"That's expensive. I don't have that many personal points on hand."

"..."

After some bargaining, Ayanokouji Kiyotaka finally purchased the midterm exam paper and answers for fifteen thousand personal points. After the transaction was completed, the other party quickly left the scene, seemingly afraid of drawing attention.

It seemed that trading past exam answers was just a private activity among students; otherwise, someone would have openly sold them to the first-year students.

"Hey, Ayanokouji-kun, what were you doing just now?" Kushida Kikyou tentatively asked.

"As you saw, it was just a mutual transaction. The school hasn't prohibited this kind of behavior, so it should be fine" Ayanokouji Kiyotaka paused

"Besides, the senior agreed quite readily. He's probably done similar things before, otherwise, he wouldn't have kept the midterm exam paper."

Kushida Kikyou seemed to be seeing him in a new light, her eyes sparkling.

"Although I understand that Ayanokouji-kun wants to take a shortcut, the questions from previous years might not be relevant to this year's exam, right?"

"You must have noticed that the previous quizzes had some very difficult questions, right?" Seeing Kushida Kikyou nod, Ayanokouji Kiyotaka continued.

"They were completely beyond the scope of first-year knowledge. Only upperclassmen could have answered them. The school knows the difficulty of the questions better than we do; they wouldn't do something meaningless."

Kushida Kikyou blinked and whispered, "So the school has other intentions?"

"I think it might be some kind of hint. What if the same questions appeared in previous quizzes?"

By placing questions that only upperclassmen could solve on the first-year exam paper, the school was sending a blatant message. Ayanokouji Kiyotaka glanced at his phone, the other party had already sent over the exam paper and answers.

"Besides the midterm exam, I also asked him to send me a quiz question and answer. Sure enough, they were exactly the same."

"That's amazing. I didn't expect Ayanokouji-kun to be so resourceful."

"I just used a bit of cunning, that's all."

"Hehe."

In response to his words, a mysterious smile appeared on Kushida Kikyou's face.

"Next, could I ask you to help print out the exam paper and answers and distribute them to the whole class?"

"I can do that, but why?"

"Because I don't want to cause trouble."

As he spoke, Ayanokouji Kiyotaka turned his gaze away.

While Kaoru Mitoma was targeting Horikita Suzune, he also needed to quickly find a suitable candidate.

With their actions, the first-year students were about to face their first tense exam. Failing would mean expulsion, which was enough to make anyone anxious.

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Meanwhile, in Class A, Kaoru Mitoma was looking at Kamuro Masumi with a serious expression.

"I think you can at least make it into the top ten this time."

For a moment, Kamuro Masumi felt speechless. She was well aware of her own abilities.

"Mitoma, I admit your guidance is excellent, but could you not joke like that?"

"If you don't believe me, we can make a bet."

"What do you want to bet on?"

"If you can do it, I'd like you to promise me one request. If you can't, you can step on me."

"..."

Hey, isn't that just a reward in disguise!

Kamuro Masumi face darkened, and she had no intention of entertaining this guy any further.

"Do you even have the courage to make a bet?" Kaoru Mitoma showed a deep look of disappointment.

"Fine, let's bet!" Kamuro Masumi couldn't stand this guy anymore.

"You'd better prepare to get stepped on!"

"Deal." Kaoru Mitoma smiled confidently.

A few minutes later, Kamuro Masumi looked at the exam paper and couldn't help but breathe a sigh of relief. Although she could understand many more questions than before, she couldn't say she was 100% confident about getting everything right.

She'd probably rank somewhere in the top twenty?

Kamuro Masumi silently assessed herself in her mind, then bravely went for it.