

# The Chances We Didn't Take

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I was on my way back to the hotel in the evening of a warm summer day as my phone rang up because I got a notification. It was from an old friend I haven't seen for about 3 years now.

"Hey, you're back to Germany? How come?" I smiled because I didn't think that he would get the news that I was back in my home country after three years. Although I was here for only 5 days I enjoyed the days with my old friends. Three years ago I moved to Japan for working at an entertainment. Now, because of the help of some more or less famous friends I got to know earlier before moving there, I'm the manager of a boy group. The five young boys went with me to Germany, because we were like a little family. They even called me "Mommy" despite I was only about 4 years older than them.

"Who messaged you, mommy? You're smiling!" asked Kenji, the oldest one of the boys who did the rap parts in the songs.

"Well, an old friend... We had no contact for a long time" I replied to Kenji and started typing my message. "Yes I am, but only for a few days. I will be back to Japan the day after tomorrow. I'm here because I wanted to meet my old friends."

"Is it a boy?" Ren, the youngest of the boys, wanted to know. He was only 16 but his abilities were mature.

"Yeah it is" I answered and waited for another reply of my old friend.

"Oooooh...!" Masa suddenly almost screamed. "The one you told us about when we had like 100 packages of French fries at McDonalds?"

I nodded. "I wonder if I was drunk because I told you guys so much"

"Well..." started Kenji again "we're a family and we also have to know about mommy's past!"

The other four boys nodded and I started to laugh. I'm really happy that I was the manager of those five boys. Well, I was not only the manager but also a songwriter, choreographer and coach for them. Fortunately they respect me and are always honest towards me because I'm only 23 years old and already in such a high position. Thanks to a famous friend. Most people don't know why I was suddenly a manager or a J-Pop group but I never tell them even if they ask. It's just that my Japanese best friend is very influential and also much older than me. We're no couple but very best friends.

In that very moment my phone rang again and I read the message. "So can we meet tomorrow maybe? I haven't seen you for so long..." I smiled again and started to think. This friend is living somewhere near Cologne and we're at the other side of Germany right now.

"Well, guys, what about a spontaneous trip to Japantown in Düsseldorf?" I inquired. Of course I knew that I would have to change the return flight to Japan but it wasn't that difficult for me.

The boys looked at me but then they smiled and said "Sure, we want to see your old friend too!"

I laughed and entered the hotel. When I was at my room, alone, I called my friend.

"Kazuko?" was the first thing he said. He knew my artist name! That means he followed my career? Well, I had a facebook page for sure, but that means he really read my posts. I was a bit confused but then I got into the phone call again.

"Yes, it's me. Nice to hear your voice, Thao."

"So will you come to see me tomorrow?" he asked me again.

"Well, I think so. It's just that I have my boys with me. We decided to go to Düsseldorf tomorrow by a national flight."

"So when will you arrive there?" he wanted to know.

"Why do you want to see me so bad?" I asked him and continued "We will be there in the afternoon, so it's better to meet up the day after tomorrow. In the late evening will depart our plane back to Japan."

He felt silent for a few seconds before he replied to my question. "Okay, well... I don't know how to say it but... there's still something I always left unsaid during the time you were still in Germany. And now I feel like telling you face to face. You won't be coming to Germany again soon, right?"

I stammered some undefined words into the phone but then I overcame my perplexity and acted like I was okay. "I don't know about that. So is it okay for you to meet up the day after tomorrow then?"

"Yeah, sure!" he said and I could tell from his voice that he was already super excited. I sighed and said after a break "Then, see you later, Thao!" – "Yeah, see you later."

I put down my phone and laid down on my bed. Suddenly I heard a strange noise from in front of my door and some voices.

I sighed again because these were my boys. I should have guessed that they were listening but I didn't mind.

"Wooooow this is Japantown?! It's so awesome!" Kenji screamed and took various random photos.

We still had about two hours left until Thao would be here so I took my camera and shouted "Hey guys, what about a spontaneous photo-shoot?"

All five boys turned around and starred at me. "Seriously?" asked Ren "In our airport cloths?" He was definitely shocked since he was a boy who really cared about his look. "Yeah, seriously!" I said again. "And you are looking super cute. Your fans will love the pics!"

I could finally convince them and started to take photos.

"Ren, please sit down like that. – Alright and Kenji, look into the camera. – Perfect!"

People stopped and looked at us. Although I was no photographer I must have seemed like one because of my instructions and my expensive camera.

"And now please look at me like you want to eat me up!" I screamed again and the boys started laughing just like the people standing behind me to watch those five handsome boys posing for my photos.

"Masa and Yuuki please put yourselves together and stop laughing!"

An amazing amount of people was right behind me and started wondering who we were. The time passed and after one 90 minutes I was confident with the photos.

"Excuse me" a young Asian lady asked me "Is this a boyband?"

"Yeah it is. We had a spontaneous photoshooting today here." I answered and put my camera into my bag.

"What's their name?" she asked me again.

"They're OTO-GO from Japan" I told her and the face of a girl next to us lighted up.

"So I was right!" she screamed "I'm a huge fan of them!"

"Really?" I wanted to know and she explained that she was a fan right from their debut. She was very thankful as I offered her to talk to the boys so she ran to them and started talking.

The young lady was her older sister. "So you must be Kazuko-Aoi, right?"

I nodded. Why do so many people know me? Am I really that famous even in Germany?

In that very moment I felt a hand on my shoulder. "Kazu?"

I turned around and there was Thao.

"Hey! Nice to see you!" I said happily and hugged him.

"Did you have a nice flight?"

"Yeah, we did. It was short so not that boring." I smiled and he smiled too.

"It's somehow strange to see you in real life again" He admitted and I asked him why.

We met in real life the year before I went to Japan.

"Because now you're someone different. You're a famous girl who manages a boygroup. You live in Japan and you speak fluent Japanese." He explained to me and looked down.

"Don't say that. I'm just a manager and because of my kinda cute style I have some fans who like my fashion too. I'm still the girl you..." I stopped because it was too hard to continue.

"No need to go on if it hurts" He looked into my eyes and I couldn't tell what he was feeling at the moment. "Do you have a boyfriend?"

"Not at the moment." I said and wasn't sure what to say next.

"Kazu!" Kenji came running towards us and asked "We will look around the city and you both can go to have lunch. No need to care about us, okay?"

I smiled because I knew his intend by saying this. "Yeah, thanks. We will meet again here in four hours okay?" He nodded and ran back to his mates.

"So let's go to have lunch. I know a good restaurant here." Thao said and guided me to a traditional Japanese restaurant.

After having ordered the meals I wanted to know what he wanted to tell me.

"So, what was the topic you didn't speak about three years ago?"

"Now I need to tell you. I don't know how to start but..." he stopped and took a deep breath "...but I regret a lot. I regret letting you down, I regret making you cry, I regret hiding the truth and the most I regret is not telling you that I loved you all the time. I was just pathetic and anxious. I..."

"... you were too afraid of another goodbye so you just didn't want to risk anything, right?"

He looked at me and whispered "Yes, kind of. I didn't want to get hurt again so I decided not to get into a situation where I can get hurt. But this was even more painful. I hated myself for pretending to see you only as a good friend. I hated to act like I was okay with that. I gave you small hints on my feelings and I saw how you noticed them. But somehow I was just too proud to admit it."

"And in the end I was the hurt one. I know. I always waited for a sign from you. I always waited for a 'Please can we talk? There's something on my mind.' But you never told me so." I looked down into my glass trying to hide my tears. It all has happened three

years ago but it still affected me so much. He was the one I was fallen way too deep for.

"I'm so sorry. I was sure that you noticed everything, but something was always refusing me to tell you how I really felt back then." Thao sighed and looked at me.

"You... you were my everything. You were perfect. Your humor, your look, your interests, the way we spoke, everything. And I wonder what I've done wrong because our miracle ended before it could really begin." I hate being confronted with my past but now I just talked about all the things I wanted to tell him. This experience was one reason why I had left Germany and moved to Japan. I wanted to forget it all and start a kind of new life over there.

"You did nothing wrong. You were a cute and shy little girl. The only one who did a mistake was me. I was too anxious. I'm sorry."

I could almost see his pain in his eyes.

"Did you have a girlfriend since then?" I questioned him and started to eat.

"No. There were some girls who liked me but something always held me back from accepting a relationship. I think because I always had you on my mind."

"I'm sorry."

"No need to be. I hurt you and that was why I didn't expect you to make the first step." He assumed and started to eat too.

"It only needed an 'I have to tell you something'. I would have had answered 'What is it about?' Your reply would have been 'I really miss you'. Then I would have had asked you 'Really?' and you would have been saying 'Yes.'"

He nodded and stood silent.

"Everything could have been so easy. Why are people so concerned? Why are we so anxious? In the end we just hurt ourselves with that."

"In the end we only regret the chances we didn't take." This was a quote I taught my boys all the time. Ever don't take a chance because you think you aren't able to do it or because you're too afraid.

"You're right" he agreed and added "We cannot change our past and right now it isn't even possible for me to make up for my mistakes. You're living too far away."

I sighed and in that very moment my phone rang. It was my best friend.

"Hey Gacchan!"

"Kazu-chan, are you still in Germany?"

"Yeah, I am. What's the matter?"

Thao looked at me because he was so fascinated by my fluent Japanese.

"Nothing. I just wanted to know if you're okay because of you-know-who."

I laughed. He's always so caring as if I was his daughter. "I'm fine. And Mister you-know-who is sitting next to me. We're having lunch together."

Gackt was kind of surprised and responded: "Really? Did you talk about your past?"

"Yeah we did. And everything was as I expected. It's a pity. He apologized for all this mess."

"I'm sorry for you" Gackt told me "Do you still love him?"

Thank god Thao didn't understand any Japanese so I could talk honestly to my friend.

"I'm not sure. Time has passed and I accepted the fact that we will never ever get back together. I've moved on. But now I'm not sure anymore. But the fact is I can't stay in Germany. My home is in Japan and my family are the boys." I ate something and looked to Thao who was completely confused because he didn't understand what I was talking about.

"I know what you mean", Gackt replied. "But it is your decision. I'm happy as long as

you are pleased.”

“I see. Thank you. You mean so much to me as a close friend.”

“You’re welcome, no need to thank me for that. I’m always here for you.”

“Alright, Gacchan. See you when I’m back to Japan. Bye cha!”

“Yeah, bye, Kazu-chan!”

I put down the phone and finished my lunch. Thao didn’t say anything and I was busy with eating.

We left the restaurant when Thao started talking again.

“What did this person say?” he wanted to know.

“He asked me if I was alright and if I had met you.” I smiled because it must seem very strange for Thao that a stranger knew about him.

“Why did he ask you? Does he know the story?”

“Yeah, he does. He’s my closest friend. When I’m sad I talk to him. We go out, having dinner or just some drinks and I tell him about what’s bothering me. He’s a huge inspiration for me.” I explained.

“Do you like him?” Thao asked.

“Damn age gap” I laughed and went into a bookstore. Thao followed me and was amazed by me, reading the Japanese covers.

“But you do like him very much, right?”

“Maybe” I said while looking into an interesting novel.

“Then go ahead and tell him! Don’t miss a chance! He likes you very much too otherwise he wouldn’t call you.” Thao said but I knew he was faking his happy voice.

“You’re again saying something you don’t want to say.” I mentioned and paid the book.

“How do you...?” He was confused and I smiled “I work a lot with people. So I know very well if a person is lying, faking his voice or completely honest.”

“I see. So I have to be honest with that. I really wished I could turn back time. Just to change how I reacted back then. I wished I could erase all your pain I was the reason for.”

I smirked and said “This isn’t possible. Our past is our past for a reason. It made us stronger. And it taught us what we should do better the next time.”

He agreed on that and we walked along the road without speaking.

Suddenly he stopped, turned to me and hugged me. This hug was very tight and full of love. Back then, I would have given everything to get such a hug. Now, three years later, I got that hug. It was a bit too late but I didn’t mind at all.

“You’re right” he started speaking again “You’re still the same girl as three years ago.”

“Still the girl you fell for?” I whispered and saw him in the corner of my eyes.

“Maybe”

I took a deep breath but returned nothing.

“So what will we do now?” he asked unable to look at me while speaking.

“I don’t know. Do we want to stay in contact?” I suggested.

“Yeah, sure.” His face lighted up a bit but I know that he’s thinking the same. I will definitely have to go back to Japan and although we both still have at least tiny feelings for each other, a relationship wouldn’t work. Why are we cursed by life?

I gave him my new mail address so we can message when I’m back in Japan.

“Kazu-san, I...” I was surprised that he used “-san” instead of “-chan” now.

“Can I...”

“What do you want? Please talk clearly to me, Thao!”

Instead of answering my question, he pulled me closer and kissed me. I wasn’t

prepared for that and could neither push him away nor bite his lips so he would let go. "Why..?" I whispered after he set me free.

"I just wanted to feel your lips once more. I'm sorry."

"Don't be sorry. It's okay. "I tried to smile but it failed horribly.

"KAZU!" I heard a voice appearing behind me. As expected it was the voice of Kenji.

"Hey guys. Did you have a nice afternoon?" I asked him.

"Yeah, what about you?" he wanted to know. Kenji was the one who cared most about me. Maybe it's because he was the oldest member and already 20 years old.

"I will tell you later" I winked and turned back to Thao.

"Now I'm curious..." whined Ren and hugged my arm. "Tell us now! He doesn't understand Japanese!"

"No, not yet!" I laughed and shook my arm. "And stop being so cute, okay?"

Ren did a pout and I immediately started to laugh. Even Thao started laughing because Ren was just too adorable right now.

"Are your kids always like that?" Thao asked and I started laughing again.

"Most of the time, yes" I smiled at my boys and they all smiled back at me. I'm grateful we get along so perfectly.

"I got you something!" Sakuya said suddenly. He's the calmest member of the band. He doesn't talk much but he analyzes people and situation very well and always knows the right words.

"Really?" I responded and took the small plastic bag. Inside were some small packages of Mochi. We have them in Japan everywhere but those were the kinds I ate in Germany so it was something really special.

"Thank you, Saku-chan!" He bowed politely.

I turned around to Thao who started to speak now "Well, it's time for farewell, right?" I checked my watch and nodded. "We need some time to get to the airport, so we have to leave now."

I saw his misery in his eyes but I couldn't take it away from him now.

Without thinking I hugged him again and whispered "You will be okay. Never give up!"

He nodded and we both tried to hide our tears. I was good at hiding my feelings because as a manager I had to pretend to be serious and a respected person all the time. This was exhausting but it was my job and I don't regret this job. I love it.

"We will meet again" he said.

"Definitely."

~Half an year later~

"Aoi-san?" My boss, Takano-san, entered my office as I was about to check my new mails.

"Yes?" I looked at my screen again.

"Do you know who this man is?" He handed me an application folder in. I turned the first page and was surprised. It was all written in English. Who would apply at our entertainment from overseas?

"IT-specialist, media, design, photography. What does this person want from us?" I almost talked to myself. The application was addressed for me but I never wanted to hire anyone. I have enough stuff. Then I read the name.

"Thao Hoang!" I almost screamed this name and jumped off my seat at the same time.

"Why the...?"

"Do you know him? Well, then I will leave it to you." Takano-san said and left my office.

This was very nice. Now I had to decide if I should hire a new photographer or not. If I hire him somebody will surely be not very content. And if I don't hire him my boss will be mad at me. So I started reading the application and decided to ask my close friend Gackt. So I picked up the phone and called him.

"Hey Gacchan, please move your sweet ass over here. I got a problem!"

A few minutes later Gackt arrived in my office.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Well, read this" I threw the application folder towards him and he started to read.

"Thao Hoang? This is the guy you met again in Düsseldorf, right?" – "Yes."

"Will you hire him?" He looked at me and I couldn't tell from his look what he's thinking.

"I don't know because I just have no clue why he is applying here."

"Because he wants to be by your side." In his voice was a strange condescending undertone.

"Should I call him?" I questioned him.

"Why do you ask me? It's your job. How do you want to become a boss of an entertainment when you ask your employee about hiring or not hiring?"

"Thank you very much, I love you too." I hit him with my fist at his arm and took the phone.

Thao answered the phone within a few seconds.

"Kazu-san?"

"Hi Hoang-san. Long time no see. I don't know what is going on in your mind but congratulations. You got hired!"

Gackt looked at me like I was a refugee of psychiatry who needs to be stopped.

"Really?" Thao asked me.

"I'm not joking. I'm serious."

"This is awesome. Will see you soon!!!!" I could almost hear a brunch of exclamation marks in his last sentence. Then he hung off the phone and I wondered if he already knew how expensive living in Japan was. But this wasn't my cup of tea, so I rather cared about my own issues.

"Which job will he get?" asked Gackt.

"Well, I'm not sure yet, but for the beginning he will be my personal assistant."

Gackt laughed and tousled my hair.

"This is the Kazuko-chan I know."

"Hey, not my hair!" I screamed and tousled his hair too.

In that very moment Takano-san entered my office again. "I don't really like to disturb you while flirting, but your kids are here."

"I see" I said and tried to make my hair look straight again. "Let them come in."

"Mommy!", Masa screamed giving me a piece of paper.

"What is that?" I wanted to know.

"I wrote a song. We have to use this for our next single! I beg you!" Masa said.

"And we already checked it. I already have an idea for the music and melody!" Kenji added.

I was very confused, because they were never so ambitious like today. So I sat down and read the songtext. Gackt was standing next to me and read it too.

*The time has passed  
But I still remember  
Three years ago*

*The day we first met should be something great  
But I was stubborn and messed it up  
I'm sorry  
I was just unable to show you my feelings  
So I ended up hurting you  
I was too proud to admit that I needed you  
I thought this feeling would go away  
I'm sorry*

*I wonder where you are now  
Are you okay at least?*

*I still remember when you cried right next to me  
And it makes me want to tear up again too  
It must have been painful I should have known  
But back then I was just an idiot  
I can imagine that you cried for me many nights  
It hurts knowing that you cried yourself to sleep  
But I was ignorant and pretended like I didn't care  
Now I'm the one hurt  
By my own mistakes*

*I could meet you again  
But you've moved on  
I never did  
I need to show you my true feelings  
Although it's already three years too late  
I'm sorry  
I can never make up for my mistakes I know  
But I still miss you  
I don't care about the other girls at all  
I still can't forget you  
I'm sorry*

*I wonder what you think  
Do you believe me?*

*I still remember when you cried right next to me  
And it makes me tear up again now  
It was too painful I knew it all the time  
I was such an idiot honestly  
I pretend to be strong and not to cry at night  
Now I feel the same pain as you felt back then  
When I was ignorant and let you down  
It hurts so much  
But I still love you*

*I would give everything to hold you once again  
Give me one last hug*

*Or tell me what you felt back then  
Were you about to ask me for another chance?  
It doesn't matter because no matter what you said  
I would have been stupid and refused you  
But now I'm wiser, now I know what I want  
Back then I was just too afraid to get hurt  
By the one I love the most  
And now I'm hurt  
Even more by myself  
My voice will never reach you  
But I keep crying out your name*

*The time has passed  
But I still remember  
Three years ago  
The day we first met should be something great  
But I was stubborn and messed it up  
I'm sorry*

*I still remember when you cried right next to me  
And it makes me tear up again now  
I was too painful I knew it all the time  
I was such an idiot honestly  
I pretend to be strong and not to cry at night  
Now I feel the same pain as you felt back then  
When I was ignorant and let you down  
It hurts so much  
But I still love you*

I put down the piece of paper.

"Did you just... write Thao's story?" I was totally confused because my boys didn't hear anything Thao said back then in Düsseldorf.

"Well" Masa started "Kind of I think."

"This is beyond perfect. Accepted!" I said and smiled.

The five boys cheered and were really happy to hear it.

"We have to create a sad and touching song. With a whole orchestra!" Ren started talking.

"And a piano version!" added Kenji.

"And a rock version!" finished Sakuya.

"Man, I'm so ambitious I want to start right now! This has to be released by Christmas! It's the perfect and most romantic Christmas song ever!" Yuuki danced around the room and took my hand. He almost pulled me to the recording studio.

"Okay okay, let's go!" I agreed and smiled at Gackt.

"Well done, girl. One day you will manage a brunch of cool groups like them." He said.

"Oh I'm not sure if I really want this. 50 guys like them? I can't really imagine." I laughed and went with my boys to the recording studio.

During the next days, my boys kept me busy because of the song. They really wanted to finish it as soon as possible. I had to write the score for the piano version and they

insisted of me playing the piano in this song. So the days passed and about a month later, Thao was suddenly in my office.

"Hi, I'm your boss now. You know what this means?" I asked him.

"Coffee?"

"No, but tea. Please go to the canteen, second floor, west wing of it. Jasmin tea without sugar please. And hurry up." I smiled because of course I acted like a super strict boss.

"Aye aye, ma'am!" He turned around and went out of the office.

A few minutes later he came back.

"Thanks. Now you will be my personal assistant until I know which tasks I can give to you. And your first task is this!" I gave him a bunch of pieces of paper.

"These are Japanese lessons" he said looking through the papers.

"Yeah. Everyone else knows Japanese so it's an advantage to know Japanese too." I winked and concentrated at my work again.

"So you want me to learn Japanese?" – "At least a bit. This is your task until I have another one for you, okay?"

He nodded and sat down at the big sofa in my office. When I came here I wanted to have a sofa. It turned out to be very useful so after a long trip or an exhausting meeting I just locked my door and slept for a while on this sofa.

Thao studied Japanese while I was planning on new merchandise and the date of the photo-shooting for "Lost Chances".

Suddenly somebody opened the door aggressively.

I looked up from my screen and saw Gackt coming towards me.

"Hey!" I screamed while standing up.

"Oh, is that Hoang-san?" he asked me and I nodded.

"Hello, nice to meet you, I'm Gackt. Please be a good assistant, okay?" he asked Thao but he didn't understand anything. Then Gackt changed into English "Oh sorry, I forgot. You don't know Japanese. Well, basically I was saying 'Be a good assistant for Kazuko-chan!'"

"Why so much irony?" I inquired in Japanese. "You're usually not like that, are you?"

Gackt said nothing but looked from Thao to me and then back to Thao.

"Are you jealous?" I laughed.

"Definitely not!" He almost screamed and left the office.

"Well, bad liar. You are!" I laughed again and sat down behind my computer.

"What were you talking about?" Thao wondered and I just replied "You would know if you knew Japanese." Thao sighed and started to study.

The days passed and Thao turned out to be a very talented photographer so I told him to take the photos for "Lost Chances". This will be the first single after their first mini album so it has to be awesome. Still I didn't know how I can make this single awesome but the fact that this was a sad song was making it different and unique. The other two singles dealt with dreams, bullying and self-confidence. Gackt was very busy these days too but every now and then he visited us while recording, practicing or during the photo-shooting.

"Never thought he would be so good" Gackt told me while I was looking through the photos for the single.

"I did" I just said and concentrated on the photos. Thao still didn't understand Japanese so we could talk without pay attention to our choice of words.

"Do you like him?" he wanted to know.

"Again? Oh just stop it. We're at work." I answered.

"I'm not your employee. I'm asking you as a close friend."

"Rather as a jealous friend, Gackt-san." I was so sick of this topic.

"I'm not jealous! I'm just..." – "... a bad liar. I know."

Gackt snorted and replied nothing. I smirked and shook my head. Why the hell is he jealous?

Thao was confused, as always but we both didn't care and he got used to the situation.

"Well, this song. Who wrote it?" asked Thao one morning when we were sitting on the sofa having caramel cappuccino.

"It was Masa. And the others double checked it." I explained.

"Really? Because it seems like you wrote it in my point of view."

"Seriously? Well, I also wondered why they knew this story but I don't care. They're like my kids so they know way more about me than I think."

Thao nodded and looked at me.

"Do you like life in Tokyo?" I wanted to know.

"Yeah, but it's kind of confusing. So much Japanese, so many people. But great shops."

I smiled. "I'm glad you like it here. But what made you come here at all?"

"I decided this from one second to another. I felt like this was the only way to be near you."

"Honestly?" I almost let my cup of cappuccino fall down.

He nodded and avoided looking at me. Actually it was pretty clear to me that he didn't apply at my section of the entertainment because he wanted to be hired as a photographer in general but his honesty made me feel awkward. I stood up and put my cup on my desk.

"But why is Gackt-san so rude to me all the time?" he asked me still sitting.

"Well, I'm not sure either but I guess he's just caring. He knows the whole story about you and me and he doesn't want me to get hurt again." I explained to him and sat down behind my desk.

Just as expected within the next two seconds the door got opened and my boys came in.

"Good morning, Kazu-sama!" Kenji screamed and jumped towards my desk.

"Did you already get the design for our cover?" Yuuki asked me and looked around.

I negated but only a few minutes later somebody came in and delivered the requested designs.

"Here we go" I said and showed the cover and the photos to my boys. They were all content with the result and even Thao was astonished by his own abilities to take photos.

"Did you guys practiced yesterday for the dance version of the song?" I asked them and all nodded and cheered. Every time when they're so happy and joyful I wonder where they take their strength from.

"So show me!" I told them and moved towards the door.

At the rehearsing hall they showed the dance to me and I was really satisfied.

"So mommy... do you know the dance too?" asked Ren and poked me into my cheek.

"Yeah of course. The choreographer and I were the creators of this dance." I replied and turned on the music. Without hesitating I started to dance and didn't pay attention to the others anymore. There was only me, the music and some world far

away.

After I finished, Thao said "This was awesome. I never really saw you dancing before." "That's because I'm mostly the girl behind the curtains. I don't show in public very often in that way. But I once uploaded a lot of dance covers on youtube so maybe you should check them out one fine day." I clarified and got a hug from Ren who always liked to see me dancing.

"She's perfect, right?" Kenji asked Thao and slapped his shoulder. "I still wonder why you let her go."

"I..." Thao was confused and looked at me.

I gazed at Kenji but he didn't notice me and continued: "She was perfect back then too. You were kinda stupid, right?" – "Kenji it's enough! Twenty pushups over there!" I pointed with my finger into the other side of the room and he warped his lips like he regretted what he just said.

Thao didn't get everything Kenji said to him but anyway he knew I was quite angry now.

"By the way" Thao started speaking to me again, "do we want to go out tomorrow?"

"Well" I checked my agenda. "Tomorrow evening would be okay. I have an important meeting all day."

"Okay, that's fine. I'm looking forward." I saw all the tiny sparkles in his eyes and unconsciously remembered the day we first met more than three years ago.

The same evening, Gackt visited me in my flat. I was about to tidy up a bit when he suddenly started to question me about the topic I hated the most.

"What do you feel for Thao-san?"

"Why do want to know that? It's none of your business actually." I replied and got angry immediately.

"Because... because I don't want you to get hurt again. I care for you!"

I turned around "I see but you don't need to ask me every day about what I feel!" As he kept silent I added "And he told me that he still likes me kind of. So what would be so wrong about a second chance?"

His eyes widened when I said this. "But back then he also liked you 'kind of'. So what if it happens all over again?"

"Gacchan, this can happen with everyone. Every boy could hurt me, not just him. So keep calm."

"But please, Kazu-chan, you know what happened after him hurting you."

I shivered when he said this. Of course I still remembered what happened. But now I'm stronger and I could handle another break up better. At least I thought so.

"So tell me, do you know anyone who would love me more than Thao? A man who treats me well, who shares my interests, who accepts me and who will never leave me even in hard times?" I wanted to know and looked into his eyes.

"Me" He took a few steps forward and put his hands on my shoulder. I couldn't retort anything because I was too shocked.

"Kazu-chan, please hear me. I love you. You just never saw it because I was just a friend."

Still, I couldn't answer anything so I just hugged him. It was a long and tight hug.

"I..." I started without looking at him "I don't know what to say. I like you a lot and I would really appreciate you to be my boyfriend. But what if the others..."

"Don't care about the others. We can show them that this is true love. They have to accept it because nobody has the right to decide about a relationship."

I stepped back and continued: "You know about your crazy fans. I'm afraid of being hurt by them! Moreover you can be hurt by them as well! It's dangerous. No matter how hard we will try to explain, there will always be someone who doesn't accept this!"

"But besides this... do you love me?" he asked me, looking into my eyes.

I took a deep breath and I felt like my whole life was passing before my eyes. Unable to say anything I sat down on the cold floor of my flat.

"Kazu-chan, please say something. Maybe we're a little different but there are even more things in which we are the same." He touched my cheek and forced me to look at him.

"I know" I replied. "We think alike. You were always here for me, you supported me and you were the one who made it possible for me to move to Japan and start a new life. I'm so thankful. Honestly."

He didn't say a word.

"So... I loved you far too long to now hide. I loved you from the very first day."

Suddenly my tears fell down like raindrops and I couldn't stop them at all. He grabbed me and pulled me closer. Then he made me stand up and was very close to my face.

"Kazuko, please be my girl. I might be difficult, but I promise I will never let you down!"

I sniffed but then I nodded.

"Please don't leave me." – "I won't"

We were standing like that for another 15 minutes or more. Then he started stroking my arm. I knew why he did this and it made me smile.

"I love you" I whispered.

Instead of a reply he kissed me. It was a long and gentle kiss. I enjoyed it and I never felt like this before. My whole body was overtaken by positive emotions and I was sure that this will be the best time of my life.

Nobody will stop me from living my dreams and I will fight for my right.

Thao will have to accept this. After telling him I will know if he came here just because he wanted me back or because of his job. I was sure that he tried to get me back but now he has to realize that he shouldn't change his whole life because of a person when he wasn't 100% sure. And he shouldn't focus on a person too much because in the end it will only destroy you.

Live your life, care about the once you love but never let yourself be dependent from another one. Because your whole life will become a mess if this one person leaves. This is what I learned. I learnt even more from my precious boyfriend but most of the things, people have to discover on their own because life will teach us a lesson every now and then.