

Comfort

Twin-story to "Hurt"

Von Gepo

Kapitel 8: Consequences of silence

In hindsight it was laughable that the one who finally brought them together was Midorima Shintaro. The one most inept at talking, interacting, even having an interest in humans was their matchmaker – his saving grace was that he had never planned on it. It began with a text message in which the other asked if they could meet. A most peculiar message for reasons stated above but Kuroko thought it must have to do with having a sociable boyfriend. Maybe Takao had forced him into contacting at least one person on a regular basis or something. Kuroko was not exactly sure what the other saw in Midorima but he had no doubt that those two shared a deep and lasting relationship. One had to be blind and deaf not to notice how the green-haired changed in a matter of months. He had only blanched when Himuro had cooked his lucky item at the party last week and let it go afterwards. That was huge for Midorima.

They met for a basketball double-date, Takao and Midorima against Kagami and Kuroko. They ended up with Kuroko explaining misdirection to Takao and Kagami teaching Midorima some of that "wild" play. Kagami's face was hilarious when the other asked him about throwing angles, rotation speed and air resistance. Somehow Kuroko was not surprised that Midorima had calculated all his shots' aerodynamic values. After they got some ice-cream, him and Kagami were talking about their last game when Midorima said: "Next time I won't play you when I am still sick."

"You what?" The red haired turned to him with a shocked expression. "You were sick? I didn't even notice."

"I had a cold two weeks before our game and was still under the weather." The green-haired smirked. "You won't get off as easy the next time."

"Man, you are unbelievable. I can't believe how horrible it must have been for people to play Teiko. No wonder everyone seems broken when they talk about losing to you in middle school. Akashi alone was horrible enough."

"Akashi is special." Kuroko agreed. "With teamwork, we would have overtaken the JBL."

"We could still do that." Midorima smiled at him – actually smiled, it even looked convincing. "Do you want to issue a challenge to them in our name?"

"I would like to relax for a bit more first." Somehow Riko's training and playing streetball afterwards had become his version of a relaxed life. "Winning against you all has been my focus and reason for a long time. Now I have to sort through my priorities." Mating Kagami was on the top of his list but what else did he want? He was so content right now. He just didn't know.

"Will you be alright?" The other suddenly turned serious. Had he actually gotten that? When had Midorima become perceptive?

"Thank you for asking." Kuroko's smile turned to a slightly melancholic one. "I was able to close the chapter called Aomine. I am not too sure about the other one right now. It will take more time I think."

Kagami looked at him with a questioning gaze. Yes ... he still had to tell him about his past. Everyone else knew, at least everyone from his middle school time. Even Takao knew. He just had to, it wasn't fair to leave him in the dark forever. But when he could not even tell the other he wanted to stay with him forever, how could he tell him about six abortions, gangrapes and his not-exactly-relationship with Aomine?

"I would like to close my own." Midorima interrupted his thoughts. "Would you help me one last time?"

"Of course." Hopefully it wasn't too hard. He trusted the other not to ask something unreasonable, Midorima was pretty decent for a rapist. It wasn't like you could exactly put the label "offender" on him when he was victim as well. "What is it?"

"As you know I hate that I couldn't control my Alpha instincts. I have trained that as well. For months now I have not been influenced by people's scents anymore. I could even pass by Omegas without a reaction. I have not tested myself on a full blast of Omega pheromones though. Would you loosen the control on your scent for me to test myself?"

That was ... surprising. It was Midorima's ultimate horror to loose control. To actually ask for that, he had to trust his skills a lot. So it was an easy decision: "Sure."

He heard Takao sharply draw in his breath. So he had not known his boyfriend would ask that. It must be hard to be with an Alpha when you were a Beta. Every Omega could just snatch your boyfriend away, you would have no chance. Midorima was doing this for himself as much as for Takao. It was cute in it's own special way.

"Kagami, if Midorima attacks me, please try not to kill or maim him. You are strong enough to simply hold him until I rein in my pheromones again." The other seemed pretty resistant to hormones, he had not reacted to Himuro after all. He had not even noticed his brother was an Omega.

"Err ... okay?" Kagami scratched his neck. "You are an Omega?"

Well. Yes. That answered some questions Kuroko had not voiced until now. So Kagami had not noticed ... no wonder he had never asked about mating before. He wasn't a gentleman, he was simply thick as an European door. He said so when Takao seemed close to facepalming.

"Oi, how should I notice my own brother suddenly ... well." Kagami became as red as a tomato. "I mean you don't expect your brother to develop such feelings."

"Himuro is with Murasakibara now, right?" Takao asked.

"Yes, after Kagami still did not notice a thing, even after meeting again, Himuro mated with our old friend." That one did have an affinity for airheads but at least his mate wasn't exactly holding back his feelings. It must be reassuring to have your lover's eyes on you all the time. "Murasakibara isn't exactly intelligent but he is reliable when you tell him it is important. He is certainly not the worst choice as a partner."

"I do question your taste. Though it is not as if your own choice was a fine example of brain power." Midorima remarked with a scoff while looking at the redhead. "Why you two who could have everyone chose nothing but muscle is beyond me."

"It is about taking responsibility." Kuroko smiled slightly. "That has become more and more important the older I got." He stiffened a bit, still surprised that the other had

not shown any reaction yet. He had released his pheromones bit by bit and already reached about fifty percent of what he could do.

"True." Midorima seemed lost in thought for a moment. Maybe he remembered Aomine. "In that case I understand completely."

"How do you two do?" Kuroko felt compelled to ask. Sixty.

"I am not sure how to answer that question. As you can see, Takao is still with me. I don't think you are inquiring about our sexual activities, so what do you want to know?" That sounded so purely Midorima, he felt like laughing but he knew the other was completely serious.

"Do you quarrel?" The first question had merely been a nicety but this was something he was actually interested in. How did a relationship with someone like Midorima work? He upped his pheromones again.

"Not that I know of. What is the definition of quarreling? He does annoy me sometimes." Well, that was Midorima for you. He did not comprehend human interaction if he wasn't explained what it was about.

"Err, Kuroko? Kagami looks strange." Takao said.

While he was still on the last word, all seemed to happen at once. With a jump even more impressive than anything before Kagami was lunging for Kuroko. Midorima stepped in between, stopping the bull-rush and being knocked at least two meters backwards for his effort. He closed his arms around his abdomen to brace for the impact, landing with a crash and sliding further for at least half a meter.

Kuroko stared for a second, having already taken a step back by instinct, before his survival instincts kicked in. Run! Run, you fool! His head urged him to go fast, faster. Outrunning an Alpha was impossible but with a head start he might make it ... where? Where should he go? Pheromones ... water. He needed to get them washed off. A fountain! Damn, no water. A pond? Yes, there was a pond.

Why hadn't Kagami already gotten him? He did not dare to turn. Maybe Midorima had grabbed him. Please have someone hold him back, he needed to make it to the lake. He did not want to be raped again, not even by Kagami. Especially not by Kagami. That was not how he wanted to be mated. He wanted to take it slow, make it nice, make it painfree.

Kagami gave off the scream of an enraged animal, quite a bit behind him. Someone must have grabbed him. Midorima screamed – even farther behind. Did Takao grab Kagami? Oh gods, Kagami would kill him. He ran faster, faster than his legs would ever carry him on a basketball court.

"Run, Kuroko!" Takao managed to scream in absolute horror. Thank god, he was alive. He must have let go.

So Kagami was free. Kuroko felt every hair on his neck stand up. He saw the pond. It was so near. But he could hear the other, hear him sprint, hear him gain on him. He would not, could not, he had to, he jumped-

Kagami had him. A hand on his leg, he would be- the hand let go. He heard another voice roar before he was engulfed in unbelievably cold water. He dived, swam, gained distance. Gods, it was so cold. A hand grabbed his clothes, ripped at them. He flailed, tried to stay underwater, dived again but Kagami was stronger. His shirt was in tatters, a hand on his leg, one on his jeans, no, please not, please-

Kagami was gone with a crash he could even hear underwater. Two fighting figures went under beside him. He turned and swam away. It must have been Midorima, he was massive enough to give even Kagami a fight. Why was it always Midorima who saved him in these situations? He saved him so often and still blamed himself for

being unable to save Aoki. No one could have saved Aoki, Aomine had been far too fast for ... not now.

He got up and gasped for breath before sinking back into the water. He saw the two Alphas still fighting, Kagami throwing a punch at Midorima and knocking him back quite efficiently. He stilled after that though. He looked at the other for a moment before he held out a hand to help him up. The green-haired simply took it without any hesitation. Only after that did he look around and found Kuroko who was underwater up to his nose.

"Oh God." Kagami began to tremble, looking at him in horror. "I ... I am so sorry, I ... Kuroko." Well, yes, he knew that routine. At least Kagami had not raped him and stood above his bleeding body. It was far harder to react coolly in such a situation.

"Your control is splendid, Midorima." He stood and nodded to the other. "Thank you for protecting me twice. Thank you as well, Takao." He bowed to him. Midorima was an Alpha, he was strong enough for such situations but the Beta could have been killed. "Are you hurt?"

"Just a bit bruised." Takao only had eyes for his boyfriend. "Are you okay, Shin-chan?" That one seemed annoyed at best, a bit grumpy, a bit mad at himself, but mostly okay. He took in his surroundings and then himself. "I want dry clothes." The green-haired stepped out of the water. "We will catch a cold if we stay like this." What a Midorima thing to say. Well, being rational had its pros.

"Quite right." Kuroko followed him, beginning to shiver before he even left the water. He would look at Kagami in a minute. Just a moment to compose himself. "Is anyone living nearby?"

"I do." Takao nodded. "I'll run and get our bags. Shin-chan, take them straight to my flat."

"I will." Midorima followed him out of the water.

Kagami did not. Well, this was it. He had to turn. He had to face that sight again. A guilty Alpha, blaming himself for losing control. He had never wanted to see Kagami like that ... and it was all his fault. How could he have been this stupid? Even with a splendid control, Kagami was still an Alpha. Only because Midorima did not react did not save him from another Alpha. It was his fault this had happened. He should turn and take the blame off of Kagami.

"Kagami?" Kuroko turned to the now silently crying boy still standing in the water. "Would you please carry me? I feel cold like this and you are naturally hot-blooded."

The redhead looked up with eyes asking, no, crying for forgiveness, afraid of being hated, afraid of being rejected. He was such a good man. How could he have done that to him? But saying so would not convince Kagami it was alright. This was too horrible for that. He had destroyed Kagami's trust in himself. This was his work, his guilt.

"Come out, Kagami, before you get a cold." Midorima supported him. He knew what this was like. He had been so broken after he raped Kuroko for the first time. It had been the first time he had regarded the green-haired as human.

"Idiots don't get colds." Kuroko deadpanned.

"True enough." The other nodded. "You'll carry Kuroko the whole way as punishment. Now come out before he loses the rest of his clothes from shivering."

Oh yes, his shirt was gone. His jeans were ripped too. It was barely hanging on his hips as the zipper was broken. He held it with one hand. A gust of wind reminded him how cold it was. Jumping into a pond in February ... well, it was better than being raped on the frozen ground.

Kagami jumped into action after a moment, coming near with long strides. Kuroko had to hold himself back from flinching by tensing up. The other slowed down, opened his arms before he gently picked him up, one arm around his upper body, the other around his hip to lift him up. He ended up pressed against Kagami's warm body just like he wanted. He let out his breath, relaxing his muscles and sinking against the warmth.

Midorima directed them to Takao's flat in silence.